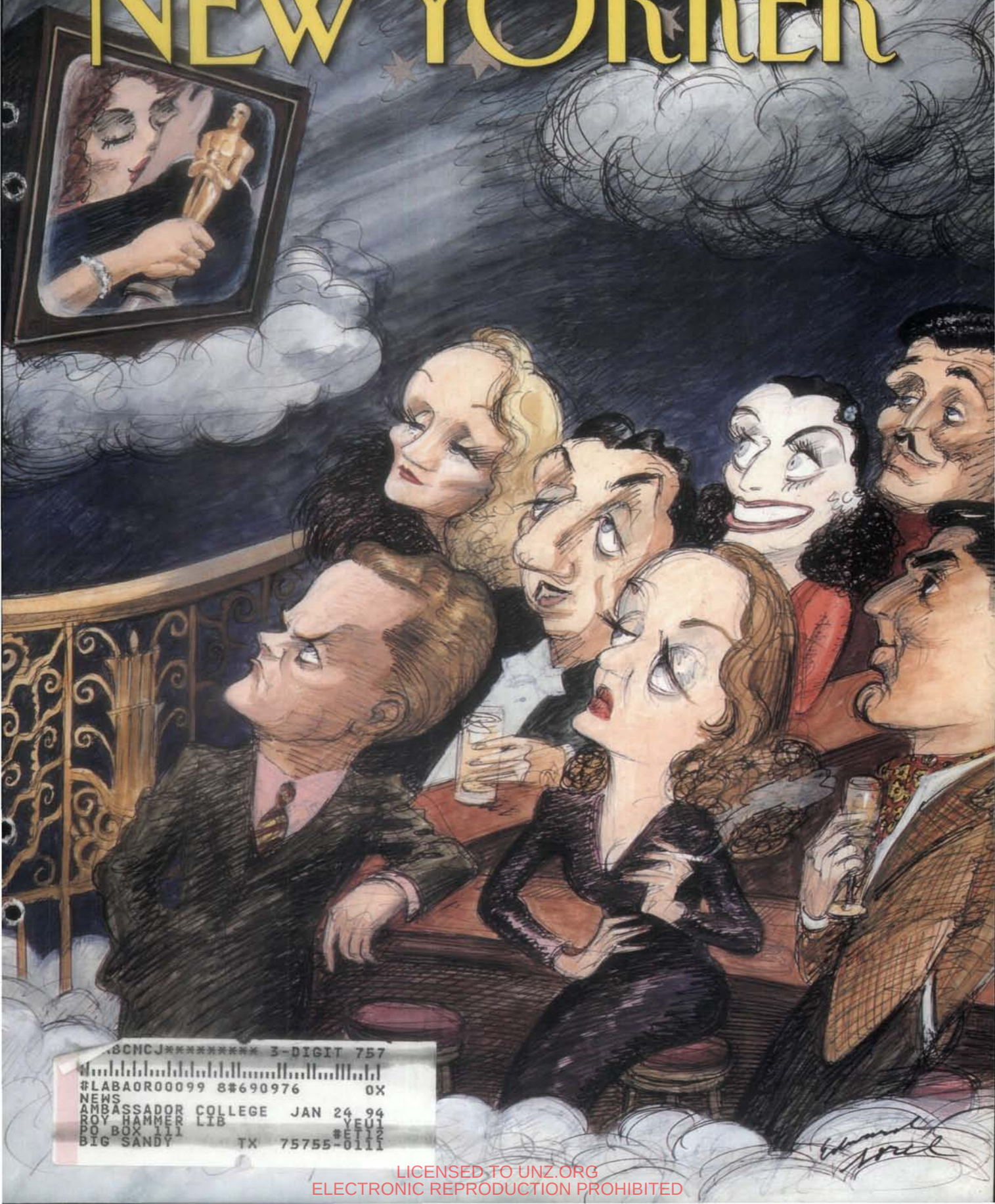


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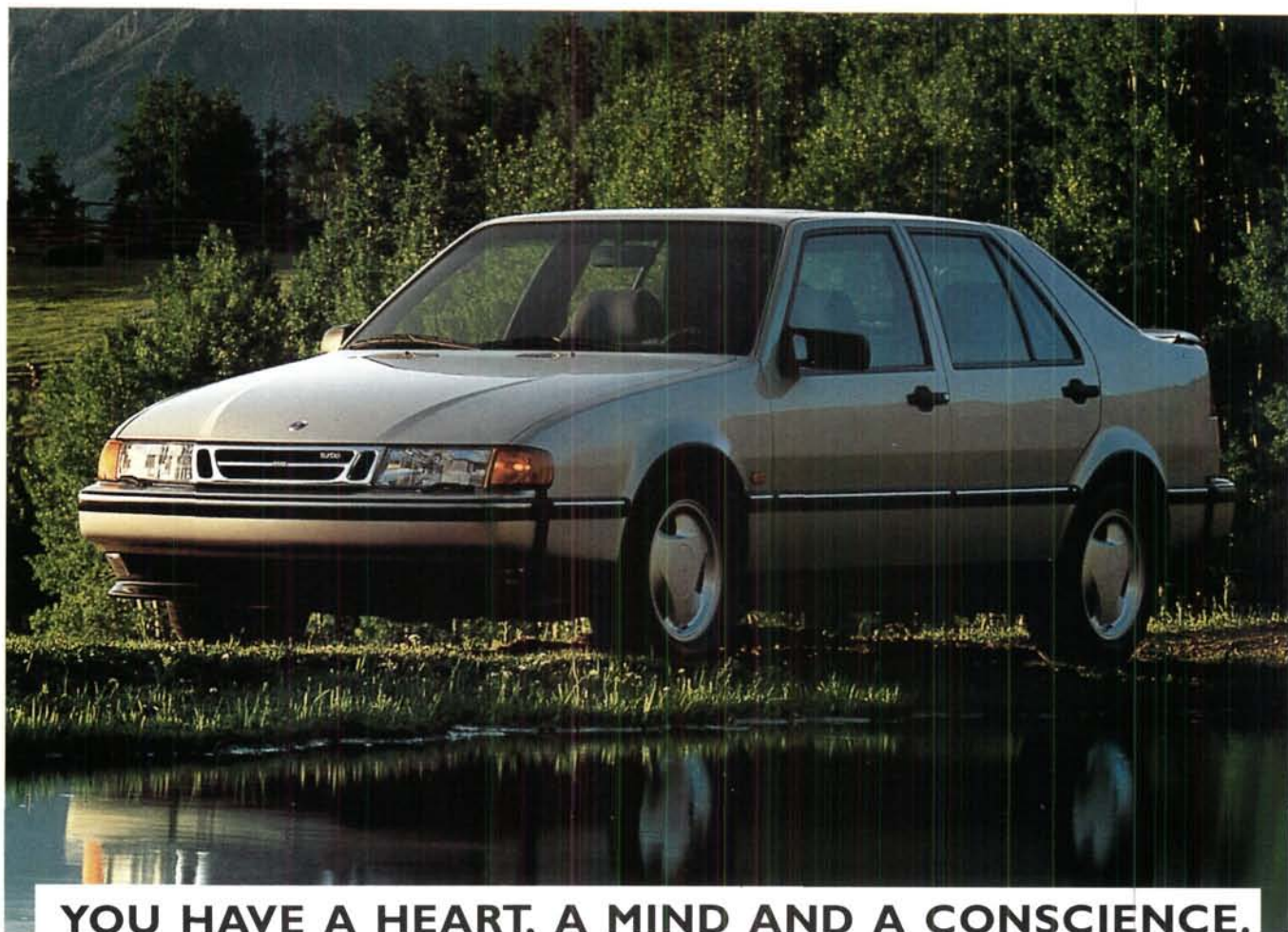
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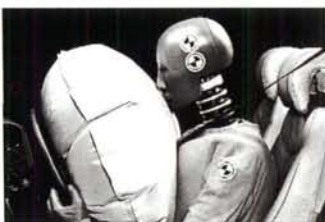


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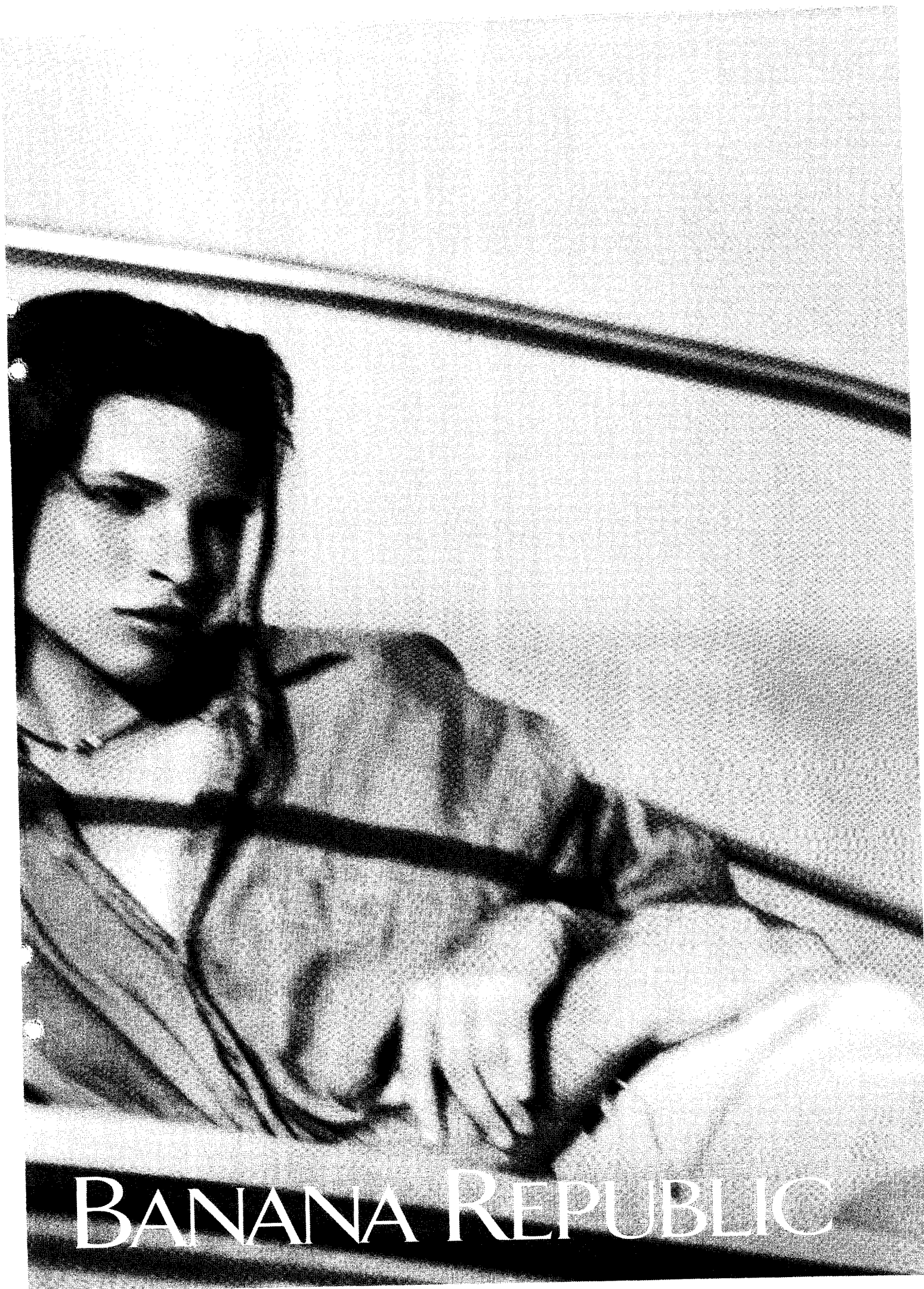
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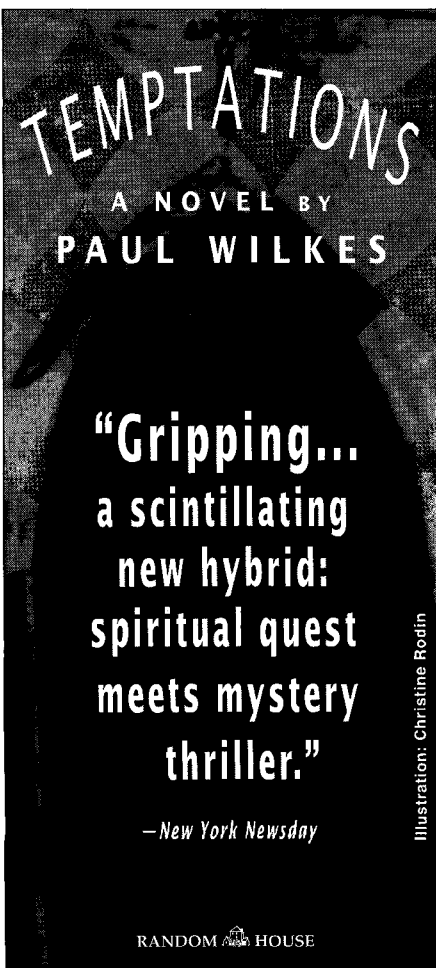
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THE NEW YORKER

MARCH 29, 1993

COMMENT Post Mortem?	6
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN	10
THE TALK OF THE TOWN	37
DEPARTMENTS	
Profile The King of the Deal	Michael Korda 42
Superagent Irving Lazar has represented everyone from Hemingway to Cher and, at eighty-six, he's still making things happen.	
In the Garden Just Reading.	Jamaica Kincaid 51
Waiting for the snows to melt, a gardener takes Proustian pleasure in the new crop of seed catalogues.	
A REPORTER AT LARGE On the Nuclear Edge	Seymour M. Hersh 56
While the Bush Administration secretly defused a major nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan in May, 1990, it also covered up years of illegal Pakistani nuclear-arms purchases.	
ARTIST'S SKETCHBOOK Hip for Spring	Michael Crawford 63
POSTSCRIPT Kurtzman's Mad World	Art Spiegelman, Adam Gopnik 74
The comic-book genius Harvey Kurtzman transformed American popular culture. Illustration by Will Elder.	
FICTION "Werewolves in Their Youth"	Michael Chabon 78
THE CRITICS	
Books Roy Jenkins' "A Life at the Center"	Adam Gopnik 89
Musical Events "Ariadne auf Naxos"	Paul Griffiths 97
The Current Cinema "Watch It," "Ethan Frome"	Anthony Lane 102
On Television "Barbarians at the Gate"	James Wolcott 105
Books Briefly Noted	107
POEMS	
"A Man-Fly"	Czeslaw Milosz 60
"Under the Old Eyes of the Night"	Esther Jansma 81
SHOUTS AND MURMURS At the News	Frank Cammuso and Hart Seely 108
COVER	Starry Night by Edward Sorel
DRAWINGS	Bruce Eric Kaplan, Mike Twohy, William Hamilton, Michael Crawford, Edward Koren, Leo Cullum, J.B. Handelsman, Richard Cline, Warren Miller, Victoria Roberts, Eldon Dedini, Robert Mankoff, Henry Martin, Robert Weber, Danny Shanahan, Jack Ziegler, Lee Lorenz, Peter Porges, Arnie Levin

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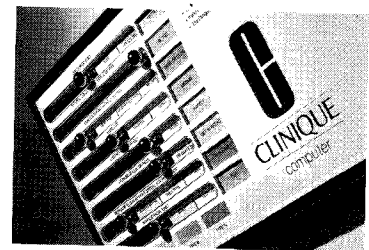
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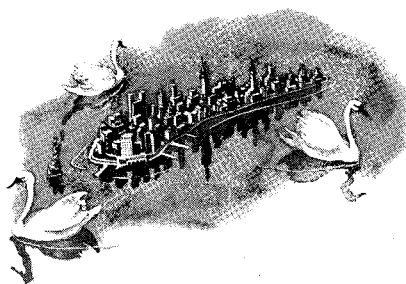
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POST MORTEM?

THE perils of the *Post* these past weeks, which look more and more like the prelude to an inevitable closing, remind us what a wrenching thing is the death of a newspaper. A. J. Liebling, who wrote the Wayward Press column for this magazine from 1945 until 1963, got so accustomed to these depressing, city-gutting events—he had been through eight of them—that, forty-three years ago, he wrote, "The end-of-a-newspaper story has become one of the commonplaces of our time, and schools of journalism are probably giving courses in how to write one: the gloom-fraught city room, the typewriters hopelessly tapping out stories for the last edition, the members of the staff cleaning out their desks and wondering where the hell they are going to go."

The editors and reporters of the New York *Post*, to their everlasting credit, have seized control of their own end-of-a-newspaper narrative. They have ignored not only convention but also the ravings and exhortations of their court-designated buyer, Abraham Hirschfeld, who

is even more eccentric than the usual would-be press baron, and who seems to be trying to buy the paper and destroy it in one stroke. Brushing aside the details of high finance and the principle of private ownership, the *Post*'s staffers have—for a glorious week, anyway—seized the newsroom and the day. No matter what else happens, the March 16th edition, in which the reporters devoted almost every column inch of the first twenty-four pages to exuberant denunciations of their enslaver-elect ("HONEST, ABE DOESN'T KNOW SPIT ABOUT JOURNALISM"), deserves a place on the closet shelf with moldering copies of *PM* and the *Mirror* proclaiming, say, V-E Day or Maris's sixty-first homer. When Pete Hamill, the fired editor-in-chief who is the paper's link with its Arcadian days under Dorothy Schiff, strode back into the newsroom last Tuesday to retake command of a cheering staff, he provided an image of newspaper romanticism that had been presumed dead in this era of readership surveys and color-keyed weather maps. Hirschfeld, for his part, has reacted with a spooky equanimity, as if he were so ro-

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botic that even unprecedented insult cannot dent him.

Indeed, last week the *Post* seemed to discover a surefire new subject for tabloid journalism: itself. In the days after March 16th, the paper continued to devote much of its news hole to its own wild tribulations. "NOW, HE WANTS TO BE GOD" was Thursday's screamer (referring, of course, to Hirschfeld). And the new formula—the newspaper as situation comedy—works. Abe Hirschfeld and Pete Hamill are tabloid characters at least as compelling as Amy Fisher and Joey Buttafuoco. The only trouble with the formula is its inherent instability. It can't go on indefinitely, even if Hirschfeld proves willing to finance it. But, while it lasts, readers are hanging on every bold-face word.

The antics at the *Post* have spiked, in some mad, confused way, the already powerful cocktail of racial, religious, and class resentments which has the city reeling and lurching. Whether or not Hirschfeld is playing with a full deck, he flourished the race card expertly when he proposed to appoint as the new editor Wilbert Tatum, who has run Harlem's weekly *Amsterdam News* with a reckless disregard for the sensibilities of Jews. ("HATE-'EM TATUM READY FOR SLIME TIME" was another March 16th rebel *Post* headline.) Still, the *Post's* staff sought to wring Tatum's neck with hands that were not quite clean. Under the ownerships of Rupert Murdoch and Peter Kalikow, the paper did not hesitate to appeal to racial passions in

hysterical headlines and rabid editorials.

The *Post* was a good—even a great—paper not once but twice. In the mid-nineteenth century, as the *Evening Post*, it was a high-minded, intellectual broadsheet. William Cullen Bryant, the abolitionist and co-founder of the Republican Party, edited the paper; Walt Whitman helped cover the Civil War for it. A century later, in the nineteen-fifties, under the ownership of Mrs. Schiff and the editorial direction of James A. Wechsler, the *Post* became the paper of Jews, blacks, liberals, and other indigenous outlaws. (The *Journal-American* was for Catholics and conservatives, the *World-Telegram & Sun* for Protestants and conservatives—and that was just the afternoon rags.)

In the fifties and sixties, the *Post* was a paper of columns—"a combination of a tabloid and a literary magazine," Mrs. Schiff called it, rather hopefully. It left the news to the *Times* and the *Herald Tribune*. Wechsler, Max Lerner, Walt Kelly (whose column was horizontal) and Murray Kempton, and, at the other end of the seriousness scale, Jimmy Cannon, Doris Lilly ("Party Line"), Earl Wilson ("It Happened Last Night"), Leonard Lyons ("The Lyons Den"), and Dr. Rose Franzblau ("Human Relations") created a style of journalism so vivid and personal that it influenced the times and, what was even harder, the *Times*.

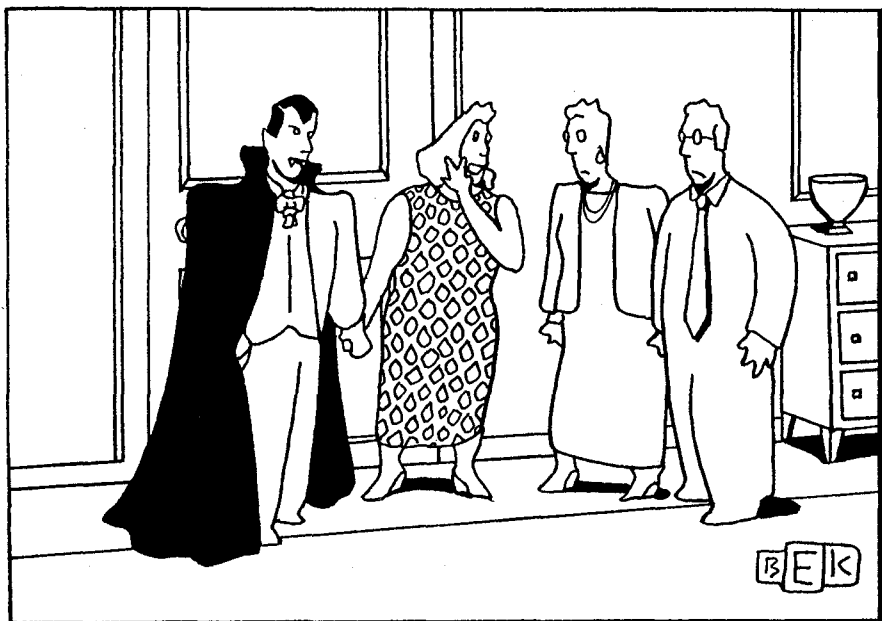
In 1955, Liebling returned from Europe to see the Rocky Marciano-Archie Moore fight and spent most of his journey purring with anticipation about what a grand indulgence it would be to dig into

a stack of New York newspapers. He seemed to have missed the *Post* most of all. And when he arrived at Idlewild he was not disappointed: "The *Post*, I could see, was faithful to its motto—'Lux et Sex.' It was streaked as evenly as bacon in an ad with the lean of levity and the fat of *Weltschmerz*, a hard combination to beat for a nickel, especially when mustarded with a political policy acceptable to a majority of the city's home-grown voters—Democratic and pro-labor."

After the *Post* was sold to Murdoch, in 1976, it became unrecognizably right-wing and, politics aside, mean of spirit. No doubt its long decline has had at least as much to do with the decline of department stores in the city as with the decline of its own standards and wit. But history may show that it was the owners of the *Post* in the late seventies and the eighties, vulgarians and cynics, who really killed it off. The legendary "HEADLESS BODY IN TOPLESS BAR" (1983) was undeniably a great tabloid headline, but the whole paper became so aggressively sensational and confrontational that it was eventually read almost entirely for its irony value, as a totem of New York incorrigibility.

Now the *Post* stands on the brink of extinction. This is a much more serious matter than last week's high jinks might suggest. The scattering of a newspaper's infrastructure—its congeries of union contracts, trucking routes, printing presses—has always proved irreversible. What the *Post* proved last week, however, is how breathtakingly fast a newspaper can change for the better even when its infrastructure is almost all it has left. A new buyer, an old editor (Hamill, please), a few new columnists, a reason for existence higher than the getting of attention and the battering of reputations, and the *Post* might be able to catch its breath and transform itself yet again.

When two great dailies, the *World* and the *Evening World*, closed, in the early thirties, Heywood Broun wrote, "I wouldn't weep about a shoe factory or branch-line railroad shutting down. But newspapers are different." It was uncharacteristic of Broun to be callous about cobblers and conductors. But, he was right: newspapers are different. Even now, they are the soul of this city, in a way that television can never hope to be. That part of the urban soul which is warmed by its newspapers is running out of fuel. If the *Post* goes, it'll be a cold spring. ♦



"I know. But I think I can change him."

JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ, writer/director.
Photographed by Brigitte Lacombe.

JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ 1909-1993.

GAP

THE THEATRE

On with the Show!

THE story goes that Carol Channing once decided, while on tour with a show staged by Gower Champion, to take a few liberties with the choreography. Chided for her actions by one of Mr. Champion's subalterns, Miss Channing turned to the young man and announced: "I'm Gower now." Randy Skinner, the choreographer of "Ain't Broadway Grand," a musical that starts previews this week at the Lunt-Fontanne, has the résumé, if not the personality, to make a similar claim. It was Mr. Champion who gave him his first major-league opportunity, in 1980, by hiring him as dance assistant on "42nd Street"—an assignment whose duties increased exponentially when Mr. Champion died on the day of the musical's Broadway opening.

While he was extremely grateful for the work, Mr. Skinner says, it was Fred and Ginger, not Gower and Marge—Marge being Champion's first wife and former dance partner—who have influenced him most during his career. That impact was only heightened by his experience choreographing and playing the leading man in a 1985 production of "Babes in Arms" that Ginger Rogers directed, but its culmination may be his work on "You're My Star," a Fred-and-Ginger-like number that he's put together for the new show. Since "Ain't Broadway Grand" is based on the life of showman Mike Todd, whose formula for success consisted of girls and gags, Mr. Skinner is working on several other glamour-filled numbers as well.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

AIN'T BROADWAY GRAND—Mike Burstyn portrays Mike Todd in this musical comedy. The score is by Mitch Leigh, the book is by Thomas Meehan and Lee Adams, and the lyrics are by Mr. Adams. Directed by Scott Harris. Previews begin March 26. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

ANOTHER TIME—A 1989 play by Ronald Harwood, about a Jewish family in South Africa. Malcolm McDowell, Marian Seldes, Joan Copeland, Michael Lombard, and James Waterston make up the cast. Previews through March 26. Opens March 27 at 8. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

BACK TO BACHARACH AND DAVID—A new musical revue, directed by Kathy Najimy. The singers are Melinda Gilb, Steve Gunderson, Sue Mosher, and Lillias White. Preview on March 24. Opens March 25 at 8. (Club 53, at the New York Hilton, Sixth Ave. at 53rd St. 261-5853.)

CANDIDA—Shaw's play, with Mary Steenburgen, Robert Foxworth, and Robert Sean Leonard. Gloria Muzio directed. Two previews on March 24. Opens March 25 at 7. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

GOINGS ON
ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



Joseph Shabalala and Ladysmith Black Mambazo in "The Song of Jacob Zulu."

JENNY KEEPS TALKING—A new play by Richard Greenberg, with Leslie Ayzavian. This show runs in repertory with "Pretty Fire." In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

LAUREN'S WHEREABOUTS—A play by Larry Ketron. The cast comprises Mark Blum, Mia Dillon, Carolyn McCormick, Kevin O'Rourke, and Scott Sowers. Previews through March 27. Opens March 28 at 7:30. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

NEW YORK THEATRE WORKSHOP—Presenting two plays by Caryl Churchill, in rotating repertory: **OWNERS**, from 1972, and **TRAPS**, from 1977. Both are in previews. (79 E. 4th St. 302-6989.)

ONE SHOE OFF—Jeffrey DeMunn, Daniel Gerroll, Mary Beth Hurt, Brian Kerwin, and Jennifer Tilly constitute the cast of a new play by Tina Howe. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

PRETTY FIRE—A one-woman play written by, and starring, Charlayne Woodard. It runs in repertory with "Jenny Keeps Talking." Previews begin March 26. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

PUTTING IT TOGETHER—This celebration of Stephen Sondheim's music was first seen last year in Oxford, England. With Julie Andrews, Stephen Collins, Christopher Durang, Michael Rupert, and Rachel York. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

REDWOOD CURTAIN—Jeff Daniels stars in a play by Lanford Wilson. Marshall W. Mason was the director. Previews through March 28. Opens March 30 at 6:30. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

THE SONG OF JACOB ZULU—Tug Yourgrau's play is set in South Africa and concerns a young man accused of bombing a mall. Zakes Mokae, K. Todd Freeman, and the musical group Ladysmith Black Mambazo (led by Joseph Shabalala) are featured. Opens March 24 at 6:45. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THREE HOTELS—A new play by Jon Robin Baitz, with Christine Lahti and Ron Rifkin. In previews. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

THREE MEN ON A HORSE—Jack Klugman and Tony Randall star in the National Actors Theatre's revival of a comedy by John Cecil Holm and George Abbott. In previews. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280.)

THE WHO'S "TOMMY"—That deaf, dumb, and blind kid comes to Broadway. Pete Townshend and director Des McAnuff have adapted the classic rock opera for the stage. Previews begin March 29. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

WIDOWERS' HOUSES—The Pearl Theatre Company presents Shaw's first play. Previews begin March 26. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

OPENED RECENTLY

AVEN' U BOYS—A play by Frank Pugliese, with Ron Eldard, Michael Imperioli, Lucinda Jenney, Cynthia Martells, Adrian Pasdar, and Lili Taylor. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

THE BEST OF FRIENDS—A play by Hugh White-more, with Roy Dotrice, Michael Allinson, and Diana Douglas. The work is about George Bernard Shaw and two of his friends, Sir Sydney Cockerell and Dame Laurentia McLachlan, the Abbess of Stanbrook. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

THE CONFESSIONS OF STEPIN FETCHIT—A play written by Matt Robinson and based on the life of the actor Lincoln Perry. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

A COUPLE OF BLAGUARDS—The actors Frank and Malachy McCourt reminisce about their Irish childhood. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

FIVE WOMEN WEARING THE SAME DRESS—A play, by Alan Ball (a writer with star sitcom potential) about bridesmaids in a wedding in Knoxville, Tennessee. Everything here—the direction, the cast, the dress—is peachy. (Manhattan Class Company, 120 W. 28th St. 727-7756.)

FOOL MOON—Bill Irwin and David Shiner are the inspired clowns in a show that is perfection itself. The only sound you'll hear is the merry music of the Red Clay Ramblers and the abundant laughter of the audience. (3/8/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

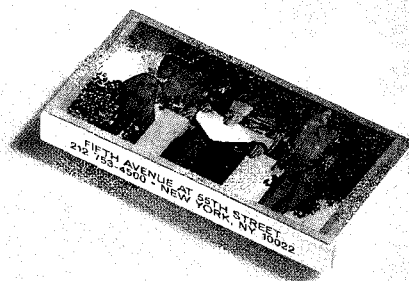
FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1993—Once again, a galaxy of parodies that sharpen into satire. This edition is as funny as most of its predecessors. Among the new shows under consideration are "Guys and Dolls" and "Falsettos," and the holdovers include "Les Misérables" and "The Phantom of the Opera." Gerard Alessandrini, as if you had to be told, is the inspired writer and director, and Susanne Blakeslee, Dorothy Kiara, Brad Oscar, and Craig Wells are the splendid performers, doing a large assortment of roles.

BETH BARTHOLOMEW

I remember the first time I met Simone and Jean-Paul.

We were having lunch at a little cafe near the Bois de Boulogne.

Or was it the King Cole Bar at the St. Regis?



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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

(1/25/93) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

THE GOODBYE GIRL—Bernadette Peters and Martin Short, two brilliant, funny stars, transform this otherwise indifferent musical adaptation of Neil Simon's movie into a sporadically festive evening. The dances by Graciela Daniele are more than helpful, as is the comic support by John Christopher Jones. Michael Kidd directed. (3/15/93) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

HELLO MUDDAH, HELLO FADDUH—A musical based on the song parodies of Allan Sherman and offering further proof that Camp Lite is taking over Off Broadway. The show was conceived and written by Douglas Bernstein and Rob Krausz. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

JEAN COCTEAU REPERTORY—Presenting **THE CENCI**, an 1819 verse drama by Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Shakespeare's **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**.



Evelyn Cisneros in the San Francisco Ballet's "Swan Lake."

(Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

JEFFREY—A comedy, by Paul Rudnick, about love in the age of AIDS; with John Michael Higgins. It is less a fleshed-out play than a series of Scenes from Gay Life, but Mr. Rudnick can quip with the best of them. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST—Shakespeare's comedy, directed by Michael Langham. A Theatre for a New Audience production. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200. Closes April 3.)

THE NIGHT LARRY KRAMER KISSED ME—A series of vignettes, by David Drake, about contemporary gay life. Starring Eric Paeper. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

OLEANNA—David Mamet, in fine, curmudgeonly form, takes on political correctness, sexual harassment, and a number of other topics in this brief, powerful drama that continues to stir up the ideologues. The play's skepticism is as evenhanded as it is corrosive. William H. Macy and Mary McCormack make up the cast. Treat Williams steps in for Mr. Macy starting March 30. (11/16/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

THE ROOT—A play by Gary Richards, with Giancarlo Esposito. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-1242.)

THE SECOND ANNUAL HEART O' TEXAS ECZEMA TELETHON—A comedy by Mark Dunn. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

THE SISTERS ROSENWEIG—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, a comedy with serious undertones, is about the reunion in London of three American Jewish sisters—an international banker, a travel writer, and a wife and mother who's a professional dispenser of

advice. They are portrayed by Jane Alexander, Christine Eubank, and Madeline Kahn. The spirit of Chekhov hovers but never intrudes. Laughter is continuous. The show has recently moved to Broadway from Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse. (11/2/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME—Alec McCowen (English), Stephen Rea (Irish), and James McDaniel (American) give stunning performances as hostages in Beirut in Frank McGuinness's moving and humorous play. Robin Lefèvre directed. (12/7/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE TOOTHBRUSH—A comedy by Jorge Diaz. Performances in English alternate with ones in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

WILDER, WILDER, WILDER—Three one-acters by the invaluable Thornton—"The Long Christmas Dinner," "Pullman Car Hiawatha," and, best of all, "The Happy Journey to Trenton and Camden." The actors, though most of them are comparatively inexperienced, do a very good job, so the real star of the occasion is Edward Berkeley, the director. (12/21/92) (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 662-8562. Closes April 4.)

WINGS—Jeffrey Lunden and Arthur Perlman's musical adaptation of a 1978 play by Arthur Kopit. The musical premiered last year at Chicago's Goodman Theatre. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

WINTER LIES—A thriller, set in New York, by Robert Clyman. Robert LuPone has the lead. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 465-1761.)

THE WIZ—Stephanie Mills and André De Shields return to their original roles in this revival of the 1975 musical. (Beacon, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Closes March 28.)

WRONG TURN AT LUNGFISH—The play owes more to day-in, day-out television than it does to the theatre, but it does at least serve as an occasion to present George C. Scott as a grouchy, dying old professor. Mr. Scott does not let us down, and Tony Danza, making his New York stage debut, demonstrates that he deserves a better part under happier circumstances. (3/8/93) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. ...

BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES: Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. ... **CATS**: Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. ...

CRAZY FOR YOU: Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. ... **FALSETTOS**: Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **THE FANTASTICKS**: Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. ...

FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE: Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. ... **FOREVER PLAID**: Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. ...

GUYS AND DOLLS: Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **JELLY'S LAST JAM**: Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. ...

LES MISÉRABLES: Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. ... **MISS SAIGON**: Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. ...

NUNSENSE: Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. ... **PERFECT CRIME**: Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401. ...

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. ... **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING**: St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. ...

THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.

DANCE

California Dreaming

ONE of the most dependable performances in New York during the late eighties was Tina LeBlanc's as the ballerina in the Joffrey's production of the pas de six from "La Vivandière." On the basis of the clarity, speed, and strength of her point work in that ballet alone, Ms. LeBlanc established a following who kept up with every role she danced. In 1992, she left the Joffrey to become a principal in the San Francisco Ballet, and she will appear here during the company's spring season, at the New York State Theatre (March 30 through April 4).

In a recent conversation, Ms. LeBlanc said that over the past year with S.F.B. she has learned roles in about half the repertoire, including that of the "turning girl" in George Balanchine's "Who Cares?" In San Francisco, she has already performed parts in Balanchine's "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux" and "Rubies," Paul Taylor's "Company B" (the "Pennsylvania Polka"), and "Nanna's Lied," a new work by artistic director Helgi Tomasson. She has also learned roles in some of the works scheduled for New York: Mr. Tomasson's "Swan Lake" (the pas de trois in Act I and the Neapolitan dance in Act III) and his "Con Brio." "I'm really enjoying myself," she said. "I like having the chance to do drama, and I'm getting a lot of Balanchine." She added, "It's nice to dance things that are considered masterpieces."

DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM—Final performances of the engagement. March 24 at 8 and March 27 at 2 and 8: "Dialogues," "Medea," and "Ginastera." ... ¶ March 25 at 7:30: A benefit performance of "The River" (company premiere), "Songs of Mahler" (with guest artist Jessye Norman), and "Firebird." ... ¶ March 26 at 8 and March 28 at 1:30 and 7:30: "The River," "Songs of Mahler," and "Firebird." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

FELD BALLETS/NY—March 24 at 8: "Ion," "Endsong," and "The Relative Disposition of the Parts." ... ¶ March 25 at 8: "Clave," "Frets and Women," and "Wolfgang Strategies." ... ¶ March 26 at 8: "Aurora I," "Blooms Wake," and "Common Ground." ... ¶ March 27 at 8: "Contra Pose," "Evove," "Hadji," and "The Jig Is Up." ... ¶ March 28 at 2: "Danzon Cubano," "Kore," "Blooms Wake," and "Common Ground." ... ¶ March 28 at 7:30: "Hadji," "Evove," "Blooms Wake," and "Wolfgang Strategies." ... ¶ March 30 at 8: "Danzon Cubano," "Hadji," "Over the Pavement," and "The Relative Disposition of the Parts." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through April 4.)

SAN FRANCISCO BALLET—A one-week engagement opens on March 30 at 7, with "Swan Lake." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through April 4.)

BALLET CONCIERTO DE PUERTO RICO—Presenting both classical and Latin works. (Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College. 1-718 951-4500. March 27 at 8 and March 28 at 2.)

DONALD BYRD/THE GROUP—In the New York premiere of "Drastic Cuts." (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. March 30 at 8.)

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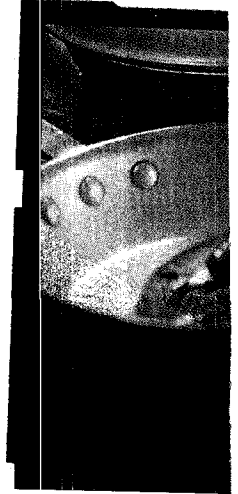
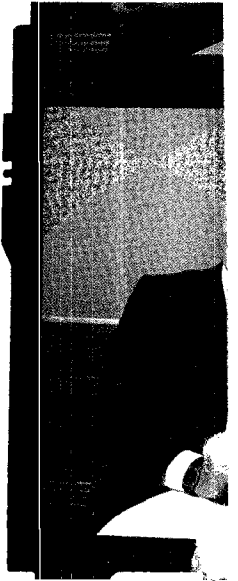
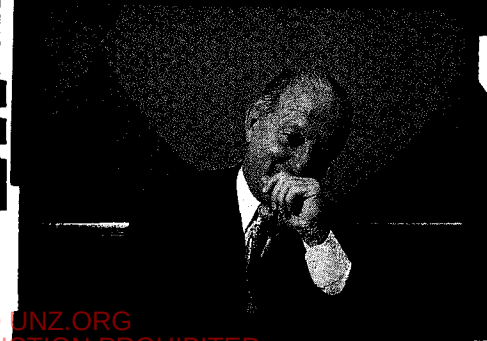
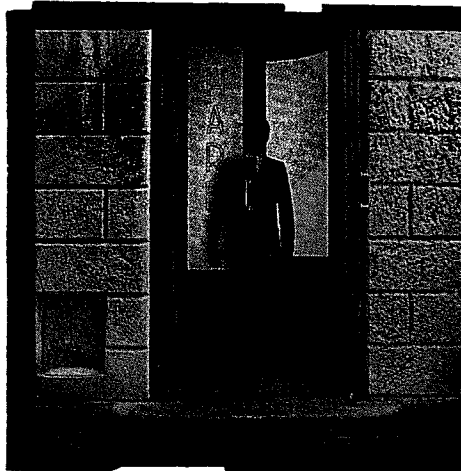
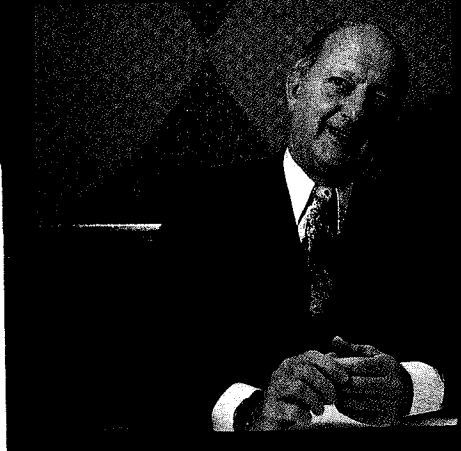


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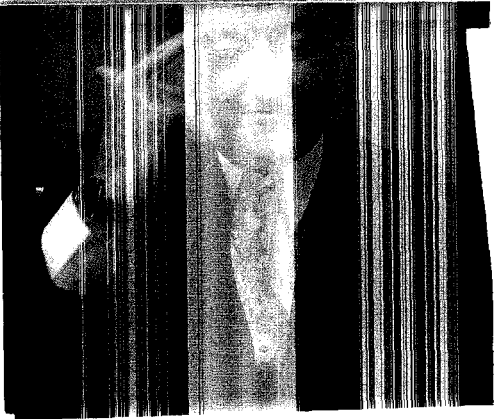
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that a good martini should be mixed 15 to 1—the same ratio Field Marshal Montgomery insisted on when fighting the enemy. So when he swung through the door of Harry's Bar he would call out, "Give me a Montgomery."

Hemingway traveled often and he valued

Ernest Hemingway named one of my father's drinks. My father had a few names for Hemingway, too.

people would come not because we were famous, but because we gave them our best.

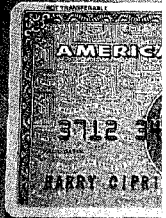
Ernest Hemingway would often come and stay for hours. He came because it was a comfortable place, and because everyone was treated well here. Hemingway loved martinis. One day he told my father

his haunts. I believe people who appreciate a place like Harry's Bar are inclined to visit more places and to see more of the world. I think that having the American Express® Card, the world becomes smaller.

Harry Cipriani
Owner, Harry's Bar
Venice, Italy



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NIGHT LIFE

Belly Dancing

TANYA DONELLY spent five years as a guitarist and singer with the Throwing Muses, who, in their prime, played a jagged, manic-depressive guitar rock, bending time signatures with their bare hands. The Muses' self-titled debut album spoke to one sort of adolescent as eloquently as the Beastie Boys' "Licensed to Ill" spoke to another. The Throwing Muses are still around, but Donelly has had the good sense to move on. Her new band, Belly, has just released a lovely, spooky fever dream of a record, called "Star." Belly will be at the Knitting Factory on March 26-27, and at Maxwell's on March 28.

As a lyricist, Donelly can be as inscrutable as R.E.M.'s Michael Stipe. She writes topsy-turvy lullabies laced with allegory and a bit of nonsense, and she sings them in an improbably small, breathy voice. Donelly's melodies can be catchy—as in Belly's sublime single, "Feed the Tree"—but more often they're eerie and remote and seem to come from someplace beyond music. "Star" is full of echoes, buzzing guitars, and harmonies both sweet and strange. Some songs rely on subtlety: "Untogether," for instance, is an eccentric little tune set to a ragged acoustic. Others rely on force: "Low Red Moon" is a thunderstorm of a song, replete with hard, raw vocals and a great, billowing organ. These days, alternative-rock bands tend to define themselves by what they're *not*, rather than by what they are—first they weren't pop; now they're not grunge. Belly is simply Belly.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, green-walled room with brass railings and mounted O'Keefian animal skulls. Look closer and you'll find that the skulls are wearing earrings. After the show, be sure to check out the adjoining restaurant/tapas bar, which looks like the indoor food market of your dreams. **CLINT HOLMES** is here through March 27. Holmes, a pop singer-songwriter, was Joan Rivers' sidekick on her short-lived late-night talk show. He went on to be the host of his own chat forum, "New York at Night." **DAVE FRISHBERG** is in for a few weeks beginning on March 30. Closed Mondays.

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**DAUGHERTY & FIELD**, a music-and-comedy team who have been known to sing "Blue Moon" and "Blue Room" at the same time, are currently at work in the Oak Room. Daugherty favors one-liners; Field, the pianist, prefers old-fashioned mugging. **WESLIE WHITFIELD** begins a monthlong run on March 30. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—This big, airy folk-and-rock club tends to be the site of a lot of music-industry bashes. If you have trouble getting tickets to the early show, it's usually because some record company has bought the place out. The later shows, though they're not as well attended and though they tend to run late, are much looser in spirit. **DARLENE LOVE** is here on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for the next few weeks. Love's set is divided into two acts. The first includes narrated segments meant to bring youngsters up to speed on her life story, and it includes highlights from the singer's long history of hits. Among the songs she reprises are "He's a Rebel," "(Today I Met) The Boy I'm Gonna Marry," and, most recently, "All Alone on Christmas," from "Home Alone 2." The second act is dedicated to new material. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Once you get past the rough bits here—the hordes of tourists, the cattle-car seating, the stiff prices—you're likely to find yourself face to face with some of the biggest names in jazz. **CLEO LAINE** and **JOHN DANKWORTH** are appearing through March 28. **MAYNARD FERGUSON** begins work on March 30. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Next door, there's a bustling, garishly lit grocery. Within the narrow walls of this venerable piano-and-bass preserve, however, everything is easy on the eyes and ears. Pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and bassist **IRA**

mark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to burn brightly here. **March 24** belongs to the **GIN BLOSSOMS** and **STARCLUB**.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through the iffy-looking side door, along the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, and down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. Vocalist **MARLENA SHAW** and her trio are in residence through March 28. Trombonist **AL GREY** takes over with his sextet on March 30. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Dining.

FIVE SPOT, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—The latest entrant in the jazz-club sweepstakes. The Five Spot is set in a mammoth turn-of-the-century ballroom. The space is all marble and gilt, with a few modern touches, such as the zebra-patterned carpeting in the V.I.P. room upstairs. The **MC COY TYNER** big band holds forth through March 28. Richard Elliot and Fattburger begin a week's stay on March 30. Dining.

GRAND, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—The former home of the Cat Club. The new owners have given the space a much-needed facelift—more bars, a paint job, and a thumping sound system. **MESH** and **BRONSKI BEAT** share the bill on March 27.

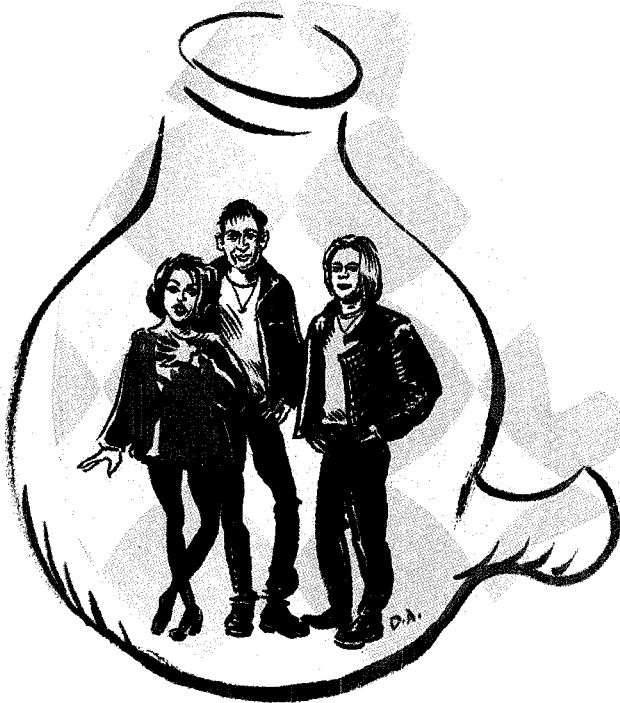
IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St.—This two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. Physically, the place is sagging a bit, but it has an odd, dingy charm. **SCHOOL OF FISH** performs on March 24. The Los Angeles-based foursome, who recently released their second album, "Human Cannonball," doesn't try to hide its debt to the circa-1967 Beatles, the Stones, and Hendrix. They have a dizzying heavy sound, featuring Josh Clayton-Felt's trippy vocals and a barrage of guitars that can give you a contact high. Despite all the noise, they're basically a good, melodic pop band. For concert information, call 249-8870. . . .

¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. The **CLARK ENO** orchestra is here on March 28. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A jazz room, one steep flight up from the Upper West Side hurly-burly. Gad-about-town **STARLA SMITH** celebrates her first farewell performance (as well as her fiftieth birthday) here on March 24. With the assistance of pianist Bill McCauley, she'll sing songs both rare ("Fire Down Below") and well-known ("Ol' Man River," in the original key). There will also be promenading hunks on hand and the world premiere of "Hamletta," "a short pig tale." **JOHN WALLOWITCH** and **BERTRAM ROSS** are in on March 25. The **JUDY BARNETT** sextet is here on March 26. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles: Sunday *Herald Tribune* covers, First World War posters, Hirschfeld drawings. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Pianist **ROB BARGAD** and bassist **BEN WOLFE** are on hand through March 27.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—The club most likely to feature an electric-rake player. Run by a couple of forward-looking Wisconsinites, the Knitting Factory books all manner of neo-this and post-that ensembles. The atmo-



Belly at the Knitting Factory and Maxwell's.

COLEMAN work out through March 27. **GEORGE CABLES**, **SANTI DEBRANO**, and **WINARD HARPER** get under way on March 29. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is currently home to **EARTHA KITT**, who jokingly refers to her show here as "the mature Eartha Kitt." Most of her songs are tales of men and money, and she doesn't so much sing her lyrics as growl them, prowling the stage like a lioness protecting her cubs. **DIXIE CARTER** stops in for a month on March 30. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club—a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti—is part sacred burial ground and part historic land-

sphere is low-key, low-budget bohemian. **BELLY and VELOCITY GIRL** perform March 26-27.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the intrinsically square Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. **JIMMY ROGERS**, a guitarist who worked with Muddy Waters, is here on March 25. Red Hot & Blue claims March 26-27.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—The bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. **TOMMY KEENE**, who's here on March 26, is a talented popster who, for some strange reason, has been largely overlooked. Over the past decade, the singer-guitarist-songwriter has put out some fine records, packed with inventive melodies and sparkling guitar work. His style recalls, in equal measure, the Byrds, Tom Petty, and Alex Chilton. Keene's performances here are rare, and well worth checking out. **JIM CARROLL** gives a spoken-word performance on March 27, with **TINY LIGHTS**. March 28 belongs to **BELLY**, **Hypnolovewheel**, and **Apollo Landing**.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—The main dining room strives for the appearance of a British pub but looks more like an American family restaurant. Still, there's a real nice red telephone booth when you walk in the door. **MICKEY ROONEY** is currently performing here, in what is, oddly enough, his cabaret debut. He sings, dances, talks about his career, and shows a few film clips. For anyone keeping track, this is Rooney's first appearance in New York since 1982, when "Sugar Babies" closed.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondund-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a lot. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an

ear-popping express elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking "Is the water too warm?" "A Grand Night for Singing," an appealing, well-produced Rodgers and Hammerstein revue, which includes a raft of fine young performers, continues its run here. Closed Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—It may look like a plain old steak house, and the photos on the walls may look like Sardi's leftovers, but in the back room you'll find swing bands, Dixieland combos, and couples who remember how to dance. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays to Terry Waldo and his band, Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, Fridays to Cathy Chamberlain and the Ace-in-the-Hole band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This midtown rock emporium hasn't been much of a player in New York's night-club scene of late. However, the new owners are hoping to turn things around with, among other things, draft beer, more diverse bookings, a new supper-club-style side room, and a security staff less intent on getting in everybody's face. **JACK BRUCE** performs on March 27.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—On March 28, the dyad with which the restaurant's upstairs cabaret is most immediately associated—vodka and caviar—will be consumed to the strains of another duo of legendary affinity: Rodgers and Hammerstein. Specifically, **CELESTE HOLM**, **DAVID STALLER**, **SUSAN POWELL**, and **LEE ROY REAMS** will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of "Oklahoma!," which premièred on March 31, 1943, at the St. James Theatre, where it would run for two thousand, two hundred and forty-eight consecutive performances (counting forty half-price Tuesday matinées, open only to servicemen), over the course of five years and nine months. Oh, what a beautiful evenin' it

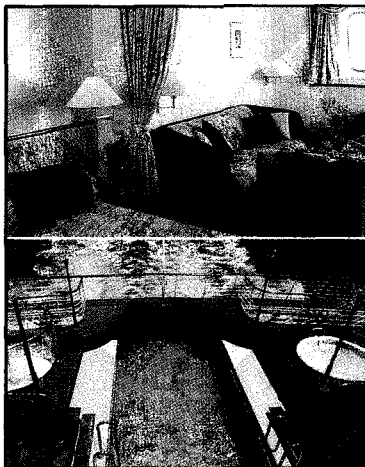
must have been. Ms. Holm, of course, was there, creating the role of the flirtatious Ado Annie. Dining.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest, this venerable club has many selling points: tropical drinks, Brazilian food, faux palm trees, a thatch-roofed bar. The live music is primarily from Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, and the dance floor is usually hopping. The cool, seductive Brazilian vocalist **ASTRUD GILBERTO** is here through March 25. **MAHLATHINI & THE MAHOTELLA QUEENS** claim March 26. The group, which has been around since 1963, is from Soweto, and they play a style of music called mbaqanga, also known as township jive. Though sprung from an oppressive environment, mbaqanga is steadfastly cheerful and optimistic, with lyrics that extol love, peace, and the power of music. This group puts on exuberant, dancing-in-the-aisles shows. Closed Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A pretty serious jazz shrine where you have to pass within inches of the stage to reach the rest rooms. The **ART FARMER** quintet is here through March 28. The **NAT ADDERLEY** quintet begins a two-week run on March 30. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

TAYERN ON THE GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—In the heart of the heart of this legendary indoor-outdoor eatery is one of Manhattan's newer jazz spots, the Chestnut Room. The **ROY GERSON** trio is in through March 28. **SUSANNAH MC CORKLE** takes over for a few weeks beginning on March 30. Closed Mondays.

TIME CAFÉ, 380 Lafayette St., at Great Jones St. (533-7000)—Hidden within this sleek and trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. Upstairs is a sumptuous Moroccan bar-and-lounge appointed with satin couches, mosaic tables, and Arabic-style fixtures. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather



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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

plain in comparison, but still a comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble, directed by tenor saxophonist Craig Handy and trombonist Sam Burtis, concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its catalyst, the late Charles Mingus. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Thanks to low lighting, muralled pillars, ironwork, and a beautifully restored old tin ceiling, this loft space manages to feel homey. The sound system can be overwhelming, but the place is big enough to accommodate both those who want to lose their hearing and those who don't. Zydeco, soul, blues, and rock are the main orders of business here. March 25 belongs to the **DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND**. On March 26, **CHUCK BROWN & THE SOUL SEARCHERS** will be in. **JUNIOR WALKER AND THE ALLSTARS** perform on March 27. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This slice-of-pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The schedule: the **CHARLES MC PHERSON** quartet through March 28; the **JOSHUA REDMAN** quartet beginning on March 30. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**.

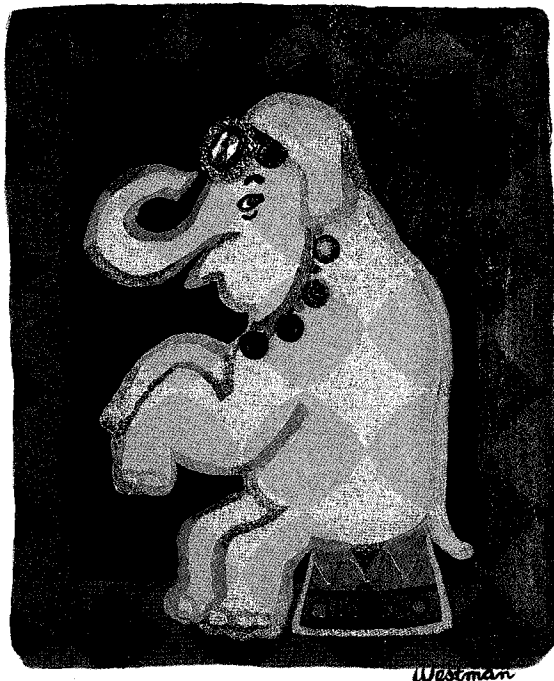
WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Home to an endless Summer of Love. Wetlands is a groovy, psychedelic, thoroughly Green night club. It is filled more or less nightly with young bands who like to play long, swirling jams and throngs of young Deadheads who like to listen to them. **BLIND MELON** is here on March 25.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—
PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

RINGLING BROTHERS AND BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS—The three-ring affair comes to town on March 25 and will remain here until May 2. (Madison Square Garden. For information about show times and tickets, call 465-6000.)

BIG APPLE CIRCUS—In its annual visit to Brooklyn's Prospect Park, which runs through March 28. (Near the Wollman Rink. Use the Ocean Ave. and Parkside entrance. For information about show times and tickets, call 1-212 268-0055.)

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL—Is it raining circuses, or what? This one's from Montreal and begins its New York engagement on March 30 at 8. Performances continue through May. (Battery Park City. For information about tickets, call 809-6969.)



ART

Make Room for Dada

THE cool and Sphinxy Max Ernst (1891-1976) was probably a lot of people's first big crush among the modernist avant-garde. Ernst, whose alter ego was a bird whose image recurred in his work and whom he called Loplop, epitomized the fey and subversive intellectualism that young people, especially, often find irresistible. One of the founders of Dada, he was a profligate pasticheur of images, and the strange Apollonian juxtapositions of his collages, photomontages, and paintings have influenced artists ranging from Magritte to Sigmar Polke and David Salle. He was also a versatile visual inventor—of frottage, for instance, a technique by which the texture of, say, tree bark can be transferred to paper or canvas.

MOMA's exhibition "Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism" emphasizes this artist's attractive and ethereal intelligence to the point where it seems like a fault. At least half the show—which focusses on work from the early and middle nineteen-twenties and includes four galleries filled with small works, most of them printed—can pretty much be experienced as a visual text, as something to be read or browsed through rather than viewed. The sudden sight of big paintings—of scale and color—comes as a relief, even if they have been ploddingly installed. By the time one gets to "The Virgin Spanking the Christ Child Before Three Witnesses: André Breton, Paul Eluard, and the Painter," one may be rather too well prepared, too studious, to really feel its naughty jolt.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Daumier Drawings," the first major exhibition devoted specifically to the drawings of Honoré Daumier (1808-79). Daumier was a working artist in the modern sense, a lithographer by trade and a savage pictorial satirist whose lampoons of King Louis Philippe once landed him in jail. The show contains more than a hundred of his caustic masterpieces, including "The Drunkenness of Silenus," "The Legislative Belly," and the saturnine "Doctor Prunelle." Through May 2. . . .
 ¶ The Greeks learned the art of stone-carving from the Egyptians, but they soon introduced innovations of their own; for instance, they discovered a way to make their statues entirely freestanding, as is demonstrated by several works in "The Greek Miracle: Classical Sculpture from the Dawn of Democracy." This remarkable exhibit of more than forty statues, stelae, busts, and figures from the fifth century B.C. features such archetypal works as "The Kritios Boy," whose tilted head and pelvis give the figure a naturalistic asymmetry that represents a new conception of beauty. . . .
 ¶ "Faces and Figures: German and Austrian Artists, 1918-33" consists entirely of Met-owned objects. . . .
 ¶ Paintings

from fifteenth-century China, in "Painters of the Great Ming: The Imperial Court and Zhe School." (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism" comprises two hundred and thirty paintings, relief sculptures, collages, drawings, and prints. Through May 2. . . .
 ¶ "Thinking Is Form: The Drawings of Joseph Beuys." Approximately two hundred works, in pencil, watercolor, oil, collage, and chalk on blackboard. Through May 4. . . .
 ¶ "Recent Acquisitions: Photography" presents some thirty works—by Jan Groover, John Gutmann, and Doug and Mike Starn, among others—that reflect the diversity of the museum's collection. Through April 6. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Picasso and the Age of Iron." More than ninety forged-iron works by Pablo Picasso, Alexander Calder, Julio González, Alberto Giacometti, and David Smith, all of whom worked in Paris between 1925 and 1950. . . .
 ¶ "Osmosis," a collaborative installation by sculptors Ettore Spalletti and Haim Steinbach. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SoHo, 575 Broadway—"Four Rooms and a House Ball: Pop and the Everyday Object" features the work of more than thirty Pop artists, including Jim Dine, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, and James Rosenquist. . . .
 ¶ "Photography in Contemporary German Art: 1960 to the Present" features the stars of German art, side by side with names that will probably be new to most Americans. There's Conceptual work, straightforward work, and everything in between, from Pop to kitsch to images reflecting German artists' postwar fixation on their national identity. Through May 9. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday through Saturday evenings until 10.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Like one of those Russian *matrioshki*, this Biennial, boasting the work of more than eighty American artists, is a show within a show within a show. You could spend days here if you were diligent about combing all the installations, reading all the texts, and watching all the videos—much of the material evincing a concern for sociopolitical issues. Better to go with the flow and not ask whither. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Manet to Picasso: Prints and Drawings from the Brooklyn Museum." Thirty-five masterworks on paper, all made in France between 1870 and 1940, by, notably, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Matisse, and, of course, Edouard and Pablo. Starts March 26. . . .
 ¶ "Fancy Feet: A Historic Collection of Ladies' Footwear" demonstrates how shoe design often reflects the times. The exhibit ranges from the sixteenth century (a pair of Italian platforms known as *chopines*) through the twentieth (Charles Jourdan's 1965 version of the patent-leather slingback). . . .
 ¶ Ida Applebroog's new installation, titled "Everything Is Fine," consists of a bunch of humdrum sketches on the back wall of the lobby, along with twenty-five freestanding paintings of chimpanzees. Jane Goodall might think she'd died and gone to Heaven, but nobody else is likely to be particularly moved. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

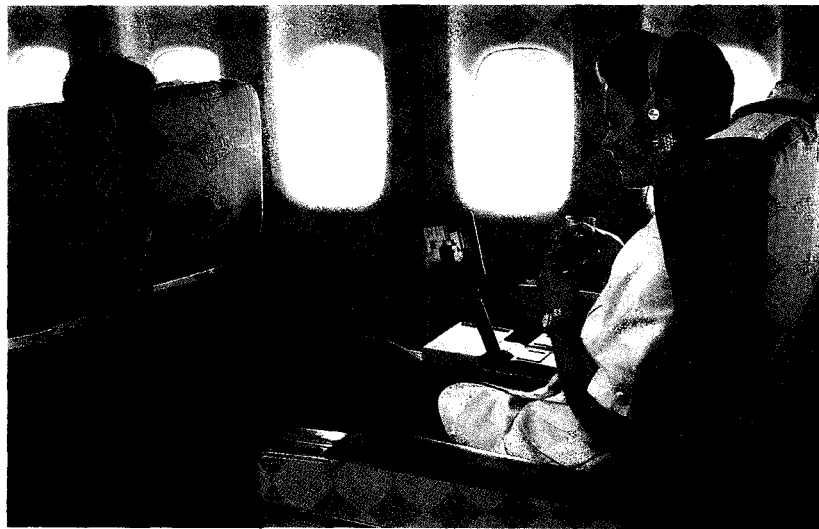
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Amazon Portrait." Photographs of the Tapirapé Indians of central Brazil. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Revolution, Life, and Labor," a show of two hundred and fifty Soviet porcelain plates, vessels, and sculptures, from the Bolshevik Revolution to *glasnost*. Through April 4. . . .
 ¶ "From Background to Foreground" examines Jean-Baptiste Réveillon's eigh-

BARBARA WESTMAN

We didn't say we were Britain's favourite airline. The British did.

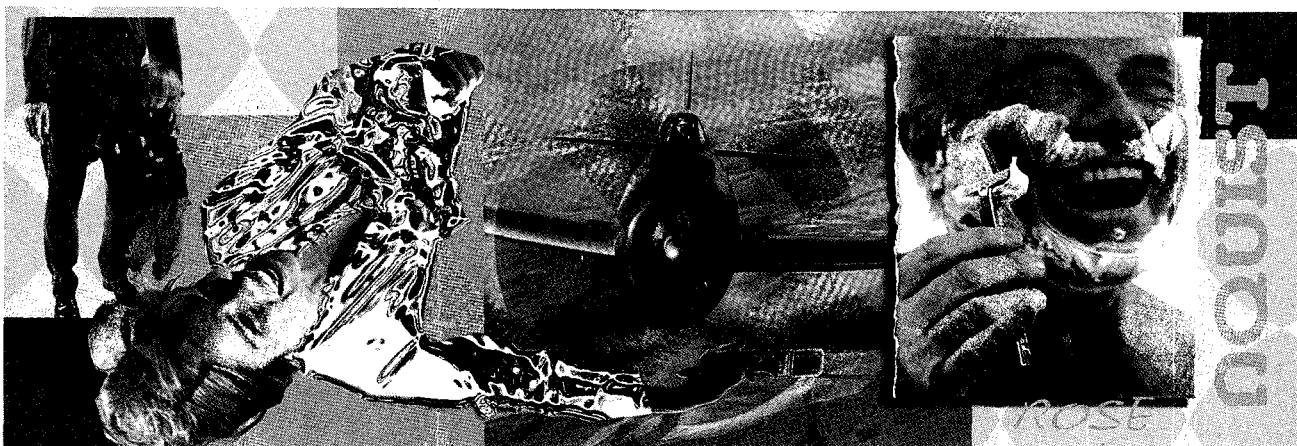
As a matter of fact, they keep on saying it. Once again, Virgin Atlantic has been chosen "Airline Of The Year" by *Executive Travel* magazine. We are the only airline to have achieved this honor three years in a row. They also said it when we were named "Best Business Class" five years in a row by *Business Traveler Magazine*. And on this side of the Atlantic, Virgin was recently rated "Best Business Class" by *Condé Nast Traveler*. You know, it sure feels nice to get a pat on the back. Especially when it's by millions of passengers. Virgin Atlantic Airways. Britain's favourite airline. Take us for all we've got.



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James Rosenquist at Castelli gallery.

teenth-century wallpaper designs and includes samples of the arabesque pattern, woodblocks, paper, pigment, and decorative objects. Through April 6. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—Thomas Jefferson had admirably legible penmanship, which makes the autograph letters and other documents here accessibility itself. And his lucid style is astonishing to ears accustomed to the inanities of modern bureaucrats. The exhibit also includes letters from Lafayette and Czar Alexander I, a copy of the first printing of the Declaration of Independence, and much more. Through April 18. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM FOR AFRICAN ART, 593 Broadway—"Secrecy: African Art That Conceals and Reveals." The museum recently relocated to an old cast-iron building on lower Broadway. The theme the curators have chosen for the inaugural show is, in effect, a way of not talking about the objects, a novel approach that replaces modernist formalism and old-style condescension with a distancing respectfulness. The exhibit showcases more than a hundred masks, figures, textiles, and architectural pieces, all from traditional sub-Saharan societies. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 11 to 8.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Bob Bishop: A Life in American Folk Art." As director of the museum from 1977 to 1991, Bishop strove to expand the narrow definition of folk art. The hundred-some-odd works from his personal collection on view reflect his eclectic vision. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of American prints from the collection demonstrates James McNeill Whistler's influence on graphic artists at the beginning of this century. Through March 28. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—The representation and reconfiguration of urban spaces, and the movement of people and things through such spaces, are the focal points of a show called "In Transit." Installations, photographs, and objects by more than thirty contemporary artists. Through April 11. . . . ¶ "Skin Deep," a show of abstract works, all containing references to skin and pigment. Through April 11. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Assault on the Arts: Culture and Politics in Nazi Germany." The infamous Goebbels—who once tried, unsuccessfully, to become an artist—considered politics the ultimate art form and Fascism a way of

"forming the solid and complete image of the people." This intriguing show of more than two hundred posters, prints, and paintings—some censored or banned, others state-sponsored and glorified—examines art under a regime that believed "blood and race will once more become the source of artistic intuition." Included here are a striking 1921 Paul Klee lithograph that was deemed "degenerate" and compared unfavorably with the work of an anonymous German mental patient, and a small placard about American jazz saxophonist Artie Shaw (whose real name was Arthur Jacob Arshawsky), who enjoyed wide critical acclaim in Germany until 1941, when the Nazis finally discovered that he was *not* the son of George Bernard Shaw. Through May 28. . . . ¶ "Christian Boltanski: Books, Prints, Printed Matter, Ephemera." Boltanski's haunting photogravure etchings—of apparition-like faces on the verge of vanishing—seem to suggest loss and unrealized experience. Through May 15. . . . ¶ "America Moves West: Images of an Expanding Nation." More than fifty drawings, watercolors, and photographs chronicling American migration in the nineteenth century. Through May 22. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5:45.)

QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART, Flushing Meadow Park—Ten works by Keith Haring: eight drawings, one sculpture, and a sixty-foot mural. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

VITO ACCONCI—Two impressive mixed-media installation works, from the mid-seventies, which use the sculptural language of minimalism to ruminate on art and contemporary life. "Voice of America," a taut examination of scale which has some of the narrative sweep of epic film, allows viewers to actually walk across a changing slide show of maps of the United States while dodging knotted ropes and trying to reach two ceiling-high chairs that overlook the gallery like seats of judgment. (And be sure to check out the soundtrack—it's vintage Acconci.) In the work downstairs, the artist turns minimalism on its side with a black geometric sculptural maze, a soundtrack that suggests film noir, and, deep inside the maze, a video screen displaying familiar objects (like pistols, hammers, ashtrays, boxes) in toy and real-life form. It is a piece that unfolds slowly, a reminder of the days when the audience had perhaps a little more time for art. Through March 27. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

ROBERT GERO—Competent, at times fussy sculptures made of contrasting materials, usually a fragile one and a sturdy one. For instance, there's a salt-and-carbon column with some

crystal shavings at its base, and a jet plane made of triangular panels, half of them lead, half paper. The artist seems to be attempting a revival of process art—specifically, of the moment when it separated from minimalism—while adding an alchemical twist of his own. But Gero's notion of magic is strictly academic, and his current efforts are rather like attempting to reinvent the wheel without understanding the concept of the axle. Through March 27. (Theodore, 580 Broadway.)

FABIAN MARCACCIO—Back in the days when Clement Greenberg's authority was at its height, painting was viewed as the lyrical treatment of technical irreducibles—the width of a stretcher bar, the sweep of a paint stroke, the flatness of a canvas. This young artist likewise tries to take the elements of painting to their formal extreme, but he doesn't know when to quit. In one work, for example, called "The Altered Genetics of Painting #1," the canvas has been split open in one corner so the wood stretcher bar reaches out like some ridiculous sci-fi creature and splats onto the canvas squirts that form the painting's images. Although good-natured in its silliness, as a work of art it's preposterous. Greenberg would likely shudder at Marcaccio's dive into abstract kitsch, at his ambitious attention to materials without any appreciable aesthetic gain. Through March 27. (Lee, 588 Broadway.)

MALCOLM MORLEY—What can you say about an artist who, though he has made several extraordinary works and is widely regarded as an important painter, has spent at least the past decade preoccupied with a sloppy, unfocused brand of expressionism, which, moreover, he uses to depict an escapist's world of tropical islands where zephyrs blow and boats sail but no hidden world is uncovered, no fantasies revealed? This show of new paintings offers more of the same but on a larger scale. The new wrinkle is that, in a few of the works, Morley has taken the crashing-airplane motif from his earlier work, made the planes three-dimensional, then aimed them directly at the canvas. Perhaps if he let the planes actually crash and blow up his chintzy paradises he could start afresh and make works worthy of his once undeniable talent. Through April 24. (Boone, 417 W. Broadway.)

JAMES ROSENQUIST—New work by the Pop artist who, thirty years on, is proving to be the most daring of the lot. There are paintings depicting the cellophane-wrapped faces of baby dolls, and there's the latest in Rosenquist's trademark series of thirty-foot-plus murals. Through April 17. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

JOAN SEMMEL—Through the years, Semmel has had difficulty making a place for herself outside the feminist art community, especially as she has taken on realist painting, a bastion of male conservatism in art. Her current show, ambitious as usual, depicts

...Feels Silky

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ART-Cont'd

scenes of older women in the locker room, again illustrating the artist's desire to violate terrain associated with men's power. Semmel's greatest problem—and it's a big one—is that she is simply not an interesting painter. This is "bad" painting at its worst, lacking in simple pictorial intelligence while loaded with sloppy expressionistic touches. Through March 28. (Bypass, 578 Broadway.)

JOSEPH STELLA (1877-1946)—A wonderful exhibition of paintings by one of the weirdest of the early American modernists. The show centers on a series of religious subjects rendered with geometric simplicity in highly saturated colors chosen, presumably, for their symbolic content. The paintings parallel in Stella's development that moment in Italian Futurism when so many of its adherents abandoned their dynamic abstraction for a more personally resonant realism. Most of Stella's subjects are Madonnas, attended by herons and flamingos that radiate a religious aura. These paintings are so kitschy that they're gripping, sort of like Maxfield Parrish meets Madame Blavatsky. There are also several fascinating portraits, including one of a young woman in profile which is pure Piero. Through April 10. (Snyder, 588 Broadway.)

NOT VITAL—A handsome installation of plops of cow dung cast in bronze and scattered across the floor. Vital's work is being sold for the benefit of young burn victims in Kathmandu. Through April 3. (Wooster Gardens, 40 Wooster St.)

GROUP SHOW—The Drawing Center's annual "Selections" shows, featuring drawings and other works on paper by comparatively unknown artists, used to be terrible, but of late they have been consistently attractive displays. The current one features six individual artists and one collaborative duo. Especially interesting are Siobhan Liddell's watercolors; Drew Beattie and Daniel Davidson's pictures of daily life, which are interrupted by some magical images; and Roland Flexner's small graphite drawings, which are of two types: tender, realistic depictions of aging and death, and schematic, nervously controlled renderings of arms and legs, cropped to make the limbs' actions seem, variously, violent and sexual. Through March 27. (35 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—**ILAN AVERBUCH**: Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. Through May 17. **MARCO BAGNOLI**: Marcus, 578 Broadway. Through April 3. **MARTIN BALL**: Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St. Through April 10. **JOSEPH BEUYS**: Gibson, 568 Broadway. Through April 3. **SARAH CHARLESWORTH** and **ALLEN RUPPERSBERG**: Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through April 24. **JAY DE FEO**: Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. Through April 17. **ROBERT GROSVENOR**: Cooper, 149 Wooster St. Through March 27. **ROBERT HARMS**: Klarfeld Perry, 472 Broome St. Through March 27. **JENE HIGHSTEIN**: Klein, 594 Broadway. Through May 9. **PELLO IRAZU** and **CAROLE SEBOROVSKI**: Weber, 142 Greene St. Through April 17. **ON KAWARA**: Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. Through April 24. **CARTER KUSTERA**: Baer, 476 Broome St. Through March 27. **MARLENE MC CARTY**: Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. Through March 27. **DAVID RABINOWITCH**: Flynn, 113 Crosby St. Through April 30. **ROBERT REID**: Kelly, 591 Broadway. Through March 30. **ANN SCHAUMBURGER**: Eno, 594 Broadway. Through March 25. **MARJORIE STRIDER**: Zarre, 154 Wooster St. Through April 3. **TINO ZAGO**: O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway. Through March 27.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

SHORT LIST—**MARCEL BROODTHAERS**: Werner, 21 E. 67th St. Through April 17. **RALSTON CRAWFORD**: Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. Through April 24. **TIBOR CSERNUS**: Stiebel Modern, 32 E. 57th St. Through April

17. **HERBERT FERBER**: Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. Through April 3. **NANCY FRIED** and **BYRON JAYES**: Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Through March 27. **ADAM FUSS** and **ROBERTO JUAREZ**: Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through March 27. **WOLF KAHN**: Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through April 10. **WILLIAM KING** and **WILL BARNET**: Dintenfuss, 50 W. 57th St. Through April 17. **YVES KLEIN**: Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. Through April 17. **CATHERINE LEE**: Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. Through March 27. **JACK LEVINE**: Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through April 17. **ALICE TRUMBULL MASON**: Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. Through March 27. **GEORGE NICK** and **SUSAN SHATTER**: Fishbach, 24 W. 57th St. Through March 27. **JOEL PERLMAN**: Emerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through April 17. **LARRY RIVERS**: Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Through March 27. (Open Mondays). **HARRY ROSEMAN**: Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. Through March 27. **CLIFFORD ROSS**: Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Through April 3. (Open Mondays). **THEODOROS STAMOS**: ACA, 41 E. 57th St. Through March 27. **WILLIAM WILLIS**: Littlejohn-Sternau, 41 E. 57th St. Through March 27.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Small Wonders

ANYONE who thinks it is impossible for photography to be as tactile as painting has a surprise in store at Gallery 292's Walker Evans show (120 Wooster Street; through April 10), which sums up photography's evocative power. Evans (1903-75) accomplished this difficult feat in the swiftest and seemingly simplest of moves, with photographs that are a mere three and an eighth inches square. These color snapshots, all from 1973-74, all made using a Polaroid, and all virtually unknown, are every bit as good as his more familiar works. Given Evans' interest in common experience, it's not surprising that the accidental poetry and visual power of everyday signs—most made by someone scribbling, painting, or stenciling a few crucial words—are everywhere here. But, more than that, it is Evans' eye and brain, his sense of color and language and texture, that are on display. These small intensifications of seeing fuse language and art in a way one associates with the paintings of, say, Jasper Johns or Cy Twombly.

BRASSAI—An exquisite show of prints from nineteen-thirties Paris. Through May 1. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Avenue, at 70th St.)

SHORT LIST—**KEITH CARTER**: Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Through April 10. **DENNIS FARBER**: Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Through April 10. **EMIL HEILBORN**: Mann, 42 E. 76th St. Through April 10. **JAY HYMA**: O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway. Through March 27. **ROMAN VISHNIAC**: International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Through April 18. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8. **JOEL-PETER WITKIN**: Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through April 24.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum SoHo, the American Museum of Natural History, and the New York Public Library.)

"Who's going
to make sure
the trees
will be here
tomorrow?"

"Not an easy question.
But that's what my son
asked the other day.
He's thinking about it.
Just like everybody.
He wants to know if the
trees will still be
around when he grows
up. Well, working for
Georgia-Pacific like I do,
I can tell him we're
doing our part. Planting
new trees by the
millions. Setting aside
land. Making sure
the forests will always be
here. For everybody.
Of course, I can't speak
for other companies
out there. But I
know we're doing
what's right."

Stephen B. Delfs

Steve Delfs
Forester

Georgia-Pacific 



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MUSIC

Reaching for the Ring

WITH Saturday's performance of "Das Rheingold," the Metropolitan Opera begins the first of this year's three complete cycles of Wagner's "Ring of the Nibelung." When the "Ring" is given at the Wagner festival in Bayreuth, everything is designed to facilitate immersion: one rises late and begins the day's opera early, with long intermissions for talk and reflection, so that the whole day, the whole visit, is spent with Wagner's music. But even if one cannot go to Bavaria, one can try to re-create that atmosphere for oneself. One can read Donington and rediscover the cycle as a journey of the self-evolving psyche, or read Shaw (or watch Chéreau on video) and rediscover it as an anticapitalist tract. One can prepare one's mind musically by reading through the scores (the large orchestral scores are all available from Dover), or by listening to the ever-proliferating recordings of past interpreters like Furtwängler and Flagstad (a whole 1950 "Ring" by these two, in excellent sound, can now be found on discount Virtuoso compact disks). Indeed, given the extreme compromises in casting necessary to perform Wagner today, there is a certain temptation to make things like these a substitute for attending the operas. But there is something in Wagner that one only receives by submitting to the dramas at their full length, in real time, sitting in the dark in the theatre. Never mind the compromises; the Met has made good on its promise to restore regular "Ring" cycles to New York's artistic life after decades of neglect.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**DAS RHEINGOLD**, with Hei-Kyung Hong, Hanna Schwarz, Anne Gjevang, Philip Langridge, Helmut Pampuch, James Morris, and Ekkehard Wlaschiha; conducted by James Levine. (March 24 at 8 and March 27 at 2.) ... **CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA** and **PAGLIACCI**, with Stefka Evstatieva, Kristjan Johansson, and Frederick Burchinal in the former, and Diana Soviero, Plácido Domingo, and Louis Quilico in the latter; Nello Santi. (March 25 at 8.) ... **LA TRAVIATA**, with Tiziana Fabbricini, Neil Rosenshein, and Sherrill Milnes; Plácido Domingo. (March 26 at 8.) ... **ARIADNE AUF NAXOS**, with Jessye Norman, Tracy Dahl, Susanne Mentzer, Thomas Moser, and Thomas Stewart; Ion Marin. (March 27 at 8.) ... **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR**, with Sumi Jo, Alfredo Kraus, Lucio Gallo, and Paul Plishka;

Michelangelo Veltri. (March 29 at 8.) ... **DIE WALKÜRE**, with Gwyneth Jones, Mechthild Gessendorf, Christa Ludwig, Gary Lakes, James Morris, and Matti Salminen; James Levine. (March 30 at 6:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

JUILLIARD OPERA CENTER—Presenting Britten's "The Rape of Lucretia"; conducted by Bruno Ferrandis. (Chamber Opera Theatre, Juilliard School, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza. March 25-26 at 8, and March 27-28 at 2 and 8. For information about tickets, call 769-7406.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Final performances of "Don Giovanni." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. March 27 at 7:30 and March 28 at 2:30.)



"Das Rheingold" at the Metropolitan Opera.

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

BRANDENBURG ENSEMBLE—Though Alexander Schneider is no more, the ensemble he founded lives on. His longtime associate Jaime Laredo will conduct the group in Haydn's Symphony No. 68, the "Spring" and "Winter" movements from Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" (featuring Mr. Laredo as the violin soloist), and Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante (K. 364, with Mr. Laredo and violist Scott St. John); also, as a memorial tribute, Vivaldi's B-Minor "Sinfonia al Santo Sepolcro," a favorite of the late violinist, conductor, and teacher. (Avery Fisher Hall. March 28 at 3.)

HORIZON CHORALE AND ORCHESTRA—Gail Archer directs Stravinsky's "Pater Noster" and Mass, as well as penitential works by Poulenc, appropriate for Lent (his "Quatre Motets pour un Temps de Pénitence" and Stabat Mater); featuring soprano Barbara Shirvis. (Church of the Epiphany, Second Ave. at 22nd St. 475-1966. March 28 at 5.)

BACH ENSEMBLE—Joshua Rifkin directs Bach's B-Minor Mass, with a period-instrument orchestra and with the soloists serving double duty as the one-on-a-part chorus (after Mr. Rifkin's, and possibly Bach's, fashion); featuring sopranos Tamara Crout and Karen Clark Young, countertenors Lawrence Lipnik and Steven Rickards, tenors Timothy Evans and Patrick Romano, and basses Christian Hilz and James Weaver. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. March 29 at 8.)

ST. THOMAS CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S—Gerre Hancock directs Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass and Schubert's Mass in G Major; Michael Kleinschmidt will serve as the organ soloist in Mozart's D-Major Epistle Sonata (K. 144). (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013, ext. 302. March 30 at 7:30.)

CHOROVAYA AKADEMIA—Fifteen Muscovite gentlemen will perform ecclesiastical works of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Rus-

sia (mostly by composers who, under the auspices of the Moscow Synodal School, synthesized the divergent strands of Russian Orthodox liturgical music), as well as secular works by Tchaikovsky, Borodin, Taneyev, and others. The group's founder, Alexander Sedov, will direct. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 30 at 7:30.)

MUSICA SACRA—Richard Westenburt directs Bach's B-Minor Mass. (Carnegie Hall. March 30 at 8.)

RECITALS

ASTON MAGNA—A gaggle of period-instrument players performs the E-Minor Trio for Viola, Cello, and Double Bass by Bernhard Romberg, as well as the better-known Octet by Romberg's better-known contemporary, Franz Schubert. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 24 at 8.)

GILLIAN WEIR—The noted British organist will include in her recital, Bach's Toccata in F Major, Franck's "Prière," and Widor's "Symphonie V" (in its entirety—not just its frequently excerpted "Toccata" finale). (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. March 24 at 8. For information about tickets, call 751-1616, ext. 227.)

JOHN DAVIS—In his New York debut recital, the pianist will perform Beethoven's "Pastorale" Sonata, Bartók's "Out of Doors," Copland's "Piano Variations," a pair of works by William Albright, and James P. Johnson's "Yamekraw: A Negro Rhapsody" (which was written in 1927 and championed by Fats Waller when it was new). (Alice Tully Hall. March 24 at 8.)

ANDRÁS SCHIFF—The pianist reaches the mid-point of his survey of Schubert's sonatas. March 24 at 8: The Sonatas in A-Flat Major (D. 557), in B Major (D. 575), and in G Major (D. 894). ... ♪ March 28 at 3: The Sonatas in E Major (D. 157), in A Major (D. 664), and in C Minor (D. 958). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. The series continues through April 3.)

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE—Claire Heldrich conducting, as required. March 24 at 8: An all-Cage program, including his "Radio Music," "Sonatas and Interludes" (with pianist Marc Peloquin), and "City Wears a Slouch Hat" (a theatre work, to a play by Kenneth Patchen). ... ♪ March 29 at 8: Music by Cage (including "But What About the Noise of Crumbling Paper" and "Imaginary Landscape") and composers who influenced him (Satie, Cowell, Ives) and whom he influenced (Edward Green). (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. No tickets necessary.)

BARGEMUSIC—Violinist Stephanie Chase and pianist Mihai Lee perform Mozart's Sonata in B-Flat (K. 378); Jian Wang joins Ms. Lee in Franck's A-Major Cello Sonata; and all join to play Brahms' C-Minor Trio. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. March 25 at 6:30 and March 28 at 4, the Thursday performance being a candlelit dinner-concert.)

DA CAPO CHAMBER PLAYERS—Performing three works by Elliott Carter, in honor of his eighty-fifth birthday: his "Pastoral" (1940), "Triple Duo" (1983), and "Riconoscenza per Goffredo Petrassi" (1984). Also on the program are works by Ives, Petrassi, and Ruth Crawford Seeger, all of whom stimulated Carter's own modernist tendencies. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. March 25 at 8.)

COSMOPOLITAN CHAMBER PLAYERS—Violinist Eric Grossman and pianist William Wolfram perform Schubert's C-Major Fantasy; Bion Tsang joins Mr. Wolfram for Shostakovich's Cello Sonata; and all three perform Tchaikovsky's

Trio in A Minor. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 25 at 8.)

JOHN SHIRLEY-QUIRK—Bass-baritone, singing and commenting upon Schumann's "Dichterliebe"; with pianist Jon Kimura Parker. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. March 26 at 7.)

MARGARET ÅSTRUP—Soprano, singing works with chamber accompaniments, by Handel, Brahms, Charles Martin Loeffler, and others. (Institute of Fine Arts, 1 E. 78th St. March 26 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

HUDSON SHAD—The men's sextet—five singers and a pianist—performs popular music championed by such prototypical "guy groups" as the Mills Brothers, the Golden Gate Quartet, and the Comedian Harmonists (including some choreographed selections from their Comedian Harmonists tribute of last spring), as well as more recent items and some traditional choral fare. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. 787-2799. March 26-27 at 7:30.)

BRODSKY STRING QUARTET—Performing quartets by Debussy and Schumann (in A Major, Op. 41, No. 3), in addition to Frank Bridge's "Three Idylls." (Weill Recital Hall. March 26 at 8.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER—Presenting Beethoven's Serenade for Flute, Violin, and Viola; Stravinsky's Divertimento for Violin and Piano; and Schubert's C-Major String Quintet. (Alice Tully Hall. March 26 at 8 and March 28 at 5.)

ANONYMOUS 4—The "fab four" of medieval music will present music and poetry from the twelfth century through the fourteenth that relate the story of the Passion from the Virgin Mary's point of view; including three very different settings of the Stabat Mater. (Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park. 923-3700. March 27 at 2.)

DAVID RUSSELL—The Glaswegian classical guitarist will play works by Handel, Walton, Rodrigo, Augustin Barrios, and Vincente Asencio. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 27 at 8.)

MAURIZIO POLLINI—The pianist performs Chopin's Preludes (Op. 28), late works of Liszt, and Boulez's legendarily taxing Sonata No. 2. (Carnegie Hall. March 27 at 8.)

MUSICIANS FROM MARLBORO—Presenting quartets by Beethoven (in C Major, WoO 36, for piano, violin, viola, and double bass—one of his earliest pieces) and Mahler (a single movement, for piano and strings), and quintets by Mozart (K. 407, for horn and strings) and Dvořák (in E-Flat, for strings). (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. March 27 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

NEWBAND—A chamber group that employs wildly innovative instruments, performing works composed for the ensemble, by Cage, Dean Drummond, and others. (Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway. 966-4444. March 27-28 at 8.)

RENÉE FLEMING—Soprano, singing a motet by Vivaldi and songs by Brahms, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, Wolf, and Britten (his "On this Island," a five-song cycle to poems by Auden); with pianist Helen Yorke. (Alice Tully Hall. March 28 at 2.)

EUGENIA ZUKERMAN AND YOLANDA KONDONASSIS—The flutist and the harpist include in their program a sonata by Benedetto Marcello, a "French Impressionist" set (by Debussy, Ravel, and Ibert), Vincent Persichetti's Serenade No. 10, and recent works by Tan Mi Zi, Michio Miyagi, and Kent Kennan. A benefit concert. (Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace, 28 E. 20th St. March 28 at 2. For information about tickets, call 866-2086.)

JERRY GROSSMAN AND DIANE WALSH—Emerging from his accustomed spot at the head of the cello section of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Mr. Grossman will move to center stage to perform sonatas by Schubert (the "Arpeggione"), Dohnányi, and Grieg, as well as Webern's "Drei Kleine Stücke" (1914) and Nadia Boulanger's "Three Pieces" (1915). Ms. Walsh, who has been collaborating with Mr. Grossman for more than twenty-five years, will assist at the

piano. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. March 28 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

CHRISTINE DIWYK—Pianist, performing the Bach-Busoni Chaconne, three impromptus by Schubert, Griffes's Piano Sonata, and Liszt's B-Minor Sonata. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. 691-6263. March 28 at 4.)

MUSICA DE CAMARA—Presenting music by Héctor Campos-Parsi. (Merkin Concert Hall. March 28 at 4.)

ARTARIA STRING QUARTET—Playing on eighteenth-century-style instruments, the ensemble will perform quartets by Mozart (in D Major, K. 575) and Haydn (in E-Flat Major, Op. 33, No. 2, the "Joke"); classical guitarist Richard Savino will join them for quintets by Boccherini and Mauro Giuliani. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. March 28 at 5.)

MERIDIAN STRING QUARTET—Performing Mozart's A-Major Quartet (K. 464), Beethoven's C-Major Quartet (Op. 59, No. 3), and Schnittke's

Piano Quintet (with pianist Dena Levine). (Weill Recital Hall. March 28 at 5:30.)

GIDON KREMER AND OLEG MAISENBERG—The violinist and the pianist perform works by Schubert, Dvořák, Irving Schulhoff (his Sonata No. 2), Bartók (his Sonata No. 2), and Liszt (his "Grand Duo Concertante"). (Avery Fisher Hall. March 28 at 7:30.)

BLITZGRIEG—To note the sesquicentennial of Edvard Grieg's birth, the Norwegian pianist Einar Steen Nøkleberg will perform every last shred of the composer's piano music. The marathon will take the form of six concerts (through April 3) in several locations around town. March 29 at 8: The program will include "Sjugur and the Troll-Bride," as well as the E-Minor Sonata, the first collection of his "Lyric Pieces" (Op. 12), and his late, seven-movement suite "Moods" (Op. 73). (Weill Recital Hall.)...

¶ March 30 at 8: A multitude of Norwegian Folk Songs and Dances (Op. 17 and Op. 66), among other works. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. No tickets necessary.)

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T

MUSIC—Cont'd

MUSICAL CHAIRS—A chamber ensemble, performing works by Théodore Dubois, Hindemith, Roussel, and Schumann (his Piano Quintet). A benefit concert. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. March 30 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

PRINCE AND THE NEW POWER GENERATION—The royal stiletto of funk, jazz, hip-hop, and rock brings his awesome revue to this Art Deco palace—a perfect venue. Even those who respond lukewarmly to the albums tend to emerge from his shows in a state of shock. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. March 24-26 at 8.)

NANCI GRIFFITH—Her selling points are a clear voice, an ability to genre-hop, and smart lyrics. On her tenth and most recent album, "Other Voices, Other Rooms," which is strictly folk, she's left her own words behind and has presented an anthology of old and recent songs that influenced and inspired her. Her duet partners' vocals, whether it's the lilting upper register of Iris DeMent or Guy Clark's gruff-and-tumble, don't allow Griffith to rely on the sometimes cloying little-girl inflections of her own voice. They'll both be at Carnegie with her, and if Clark and Griffith don't sing "Do Re Mi," you should ask for yours back. (Carnegie Hall, 247-7800. March 25 at 8.)

DEF LEPPARD—These blokes from working-class Sheffield first hit the jackpot ten years ago with the definitive blend of big hair, tight britches, and chant-along choruses—and it's been paying off ever since. The boys have prevailed despite an extra ration of tragedy—an alcohol-related death and a vehicular amputation—which, naturally, guarantees them a sentimental niche in the rock pantheon. Still, new guitarist Vivian Campbell can really play, and Rick Allen is the best one-armed drummer in the business. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. March 26 at 8.)

DAMN YANKEES—That Ted Nugent, notorious bow hunter and nemesis of vegans the world over, turned up in this schlock-infested unit should come as no surprise. After all, the Nuge has always been a self-professed Journey fan and poseur extraordinaire. Damn Yankees smells like Nugent's play for the big money—a lame collaboration with Tommy Shaw, formerly of Styx, and other members too Lilliputian to mention. (Radio City Music Hall. March 27 at 8.)

SADE—With Me Phi Me. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden, 465-6000. March 24 at 8.)

"THE BIRTH OF JAZZ"—A program featuring singer Barbara Lea and cornettist Richard Sudhalter and his orchestra. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. March 26 at 8.)

MAJID KIANI—Playing Persian music. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. March 26 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

"JAZZ FOR YOUNG PEOPLE" CONCERT—With Wynton Marsalis and his group. (Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050. March 27 at 11 A.M. and 1 P.M.)

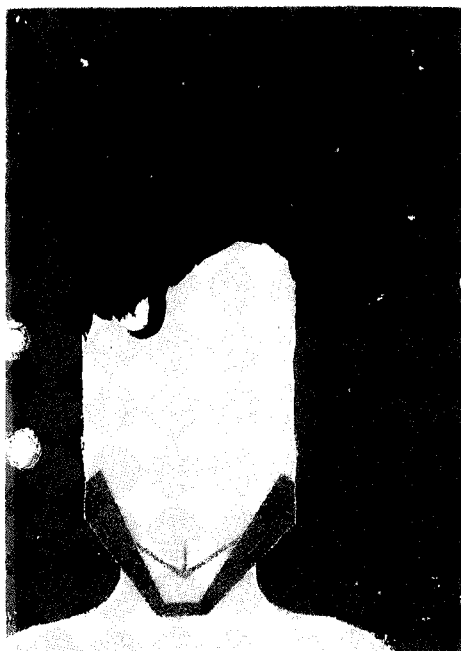
BLUES HARP SUMMIT—A festival of blues-harmonica players: Sugar Blue and his band, David (Honeyboy) Edwards, Charlie Sayles, and Little Sammy Davis & Midnight Slim. (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510. March 27 at 8.)

HOUSE OF PAIN—With Rage Against the Machine and Wool. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. March 27 at 8.)

STEEL-BAND MUSIC—With the C.A.S.Y.M. Steel Orchestra. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 28 at 3.)

JAZZ AND KLEZMER MUSIC—Featuring the Valerie Capers quartet and the West End Klezmerim band. (Metropolitan Synagogue, 40 E. 35th St. 679-8580. March 28 at 3.)

CASTANET CONCERT—Matteo and four other castanet players. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2950. March 28 at 7:30.)



Prince at Radio City Music Hall.

BILL COSBY—In a benefit performance. (Carnegie Hall, 247-7800, March 29 at 8:30.)

ROULETTE—March 25: David Watson. . . ¶ March 26: Matthew Shipp. . . ¶ March 27: Tom Hamilton and J. D. Parran. . . ¶ March 28: Jim Staley, Chris Cochrane, and James Lo. (228 West Broadway, 219-8242. Concerts at 9.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

KNICKS—Vs. the Sacramento Kings, March 30 at 7:30.

NETS—Vs. the Charlotte Hornets, March 24. . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia 76ers, March 30. (Game time, 7:30.)

RANGERS—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, March 24. . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago Black Hawks, March 26. . . ¶ Vs. the Quebec Nordiques, March 28. (Game time, 7:30.)

ISLANDERS—Vs. the Washington Capitals, March 25. . . ¶ Vs. the San Jose Sharks, March 27. . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, March 30. (Game time, 7:35.)

DEVILS—Vs. San Jose Sharks, March 29 at 7:35. (The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

HORSES—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. . . **TROTTING** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:45. . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

I CAN NAME THAT POEM IN TWO IAMBS—Local poetry organizations, such as the Academy of American Poets and Poets House, will face off in a Nuyorican Poets Café benefit game show. It will include round-robin poems, identifications, and extemporaneous haiku, giving it the ring of an English 1 final made up by Alex Trebek and Allen Ginsberg. (236 E. 3rd St. March 26 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the event.)

A-CHEEVER-MENTS—John Cheever's son, daughter, and wife have chosen their favorites of his stories for an evening in the Selected

Shorts series. The readers will be Charles Keating, Malachy McCourt, and Jason Robards. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. March 24 at 6:30.)

ANIMAL WALK—The elephants, zebras, camels, horses, and llamas of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus will walk through the Midtown Tunnel on March 25 at about 1 A.M. The animals will proceed west on 34th Street, stop in front of A. & S., near Herald Square, where tables of snack food will be available for the critters, and finally bed down at Madison Square Garden, their home for the five-week run of the circus. See In Another Category for further information.

LIFT AND SEPARATE—The art of a hundred women, including Sue Coe and Elizabeth Murray, in an exhibit celebrating Women's History Month. (Tweed Gallery, 52 Chambers St. Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 5. Through March 31.) . . . ¶ An exhibit of ninety years' worth of women's images in advertising, including the Maidenform woman and Rosie the Riveter. (One Club, 32 E. 21st St. Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 6. Through April 30.)

TRIPLE PLAY—Dorothy Allison will give three free readings from her 1992 novel, "Bastard Out of Carolina." (Endicott Booksellers, 450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. March 24 at 8. . . Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. March 25 at 8. . . Cornelia Street Cafe, 29 Cornelia St. March 26 at 6, with Jewelle Gomez and Ruthann Robson.)

READINGS—March 24 at 8: Maureen Howard and Ann Lauterbach will read from their own work. (La Mama La Galleria, 6 E. 1st St. Admission by contribution.) . . . ¶ March 24 at 9: Anne Waldman will read from her new book of poems, "Troubairitz." (Fez, at Time Café, 380 Lafayette St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ March 26 at 7: Gloria Naylor will converse with the Ghanaian novelist Ama Ata Aidoo, who will also read from her own work. (New York University, Tisch Building, 40 W. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ March 29 at 8: Susan Minot and Tatyana Tolstaya will read from their own fiction. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

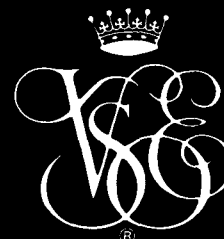
TALKS—March 24 at 6: Novelist James Purdy will be interviewed by novelist and poet Bradford Morrow. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571.) . . . ¶ March 24 at 7: Mexican writer and diplomat Carlos Fuentes will give a talk titled "Conjunctions Between Mexico and the United States." (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ March 25 at 6:30: "Dance and Immigration: The Mambo" will be a discussion about the Cuban dance, and, generally, about Latinos' struggle to maintain their culture. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center. 870-1671.) . . . ¶ March 26 at 10:30 P.M.: Larry Clark will talk about his photography. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the talk.) . . . ¶ March 28 at 7:30: Nat Hentoff, Mr. First Amendment, will talk about his recent book, "Free Speech for Me—But Not for Thee." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ March 30 at 8: Reuben M. Greenberg, the first African-American-Jewish chief of police of Charleston, South Carolina, will be the final speaker in a forum on contemporary values. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

WEEKEND WALKS—March 27 at noon: Big Onion Walking Tours will investigate the food and history of the Lower East Side, Chinatown, and Little Italy. For more information, call 439-1090. . . ¶ March 28 at 10: 'Tis the season for hawk watching, and the Urban Park Rangers will show you where to look, for free. Meet on Central Park W. at 100th St. Do not bring birdseed. . . ¶ March 28 at 1: Radical Walking Tours will check out the Chelsea Hotel neighborhood. For more information, call 1-718 492-0069.

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EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "Enchanted April" (directed by Mike Newell), with Joan Plowright.

Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 3: "Mac" (John Turturro).

Theatre 4: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).

Theatre 5: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Theatre 6: "Bad Lieutenant" (Abel Ferrara).

LITTLE THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

"Jit" (Michael Raeburn).

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: Through March 25: "Sommersby" (Jon Amiel), with Richard Gere and Jodie Foster. From March 26: "The Opposite Sex and How to Live with Them" (Matthew Meshekoﬀ), with Arye Gross.

Theatre 2: "Passion Fish" (†).

Theatre 3: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.

VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)

Theatre 1: "El Mariachi" (†).

Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).

Theatre 3: "Fire in the Sky" (†).

Theatre 4: "Just Another Girl on the I.R.T." (†).

Theatre 5: Through March 25: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon). From March 26: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).

Theatre 6: "Falling Down" (†).

Theatre 7: "Groundhog Day" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

"Last Call at Maud's" (Paris Poirier).

VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)

Theatre 1: "The Last Days of Chez Nous" (†).

Theatre 2: "Swing Kids" (†).

Theatre 3: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 4: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 5: "Howards End" (James Ivory).

Theatre 6: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 7: "Unforgiven" (†).

19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: Through March 25: "Fire in the Sky" (†). From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 2: Through March 25: "Swing Kids" (†). From March 26: "Watch It" (†).

Theatre 3: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 4: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 5: "Howards End" (James Ivory).

Theatre 6: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 7: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 8: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 9: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 10: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 11: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 12: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 13: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 14: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 15: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 16: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 17: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 18: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 19: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 20: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 21: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 22: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 23: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 24: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

Theatre 25: (Matinées only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Damage" (Louis Malle), with Jeremy Irons and Miranda Richardson.

Theatre 26: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 27: "Unforgiven" (†).

Theatre 28: "A River Runs Through It" (Robert Redford).

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 33.

Theatre 3: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.

Theatre 4: Through March 25: "Sommersby" (Jon Amiel), with Richard Gere and Jodie Foster. From March 26: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).

Theatre 5: "Ethan Frome" (†).

Theatre 6: "Unforgiven" (†).

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"Peter's Friends" (Kenneth Branagh); and "Flirting" (John Duigan).

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson.

From March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.

MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

Theatre 1: "CB4" (†).

Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).

Theatre 3: Through March 25: "Swing Kids" (†). From March 26: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).

Theatre 4: Through March 25: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon). From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Fire in the Sky" (†).

Theatre 2: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 3: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Mad Dog and Glory" (†).

SUTTON 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Theatre 1: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Crying Game" (†).

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Passion Fish" (†).

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"Malcolm X" (Spike Lee), with Denzel Washington.

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "CB4" (†).

Theatre 2: "CB4" (†).

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Aladdin," an animated film; and "Lorenzo's Oil" (George Miller), with Nick Nolte and Susan Sarandon.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.

Theatre 2: "Mad Dog and Glory" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 4: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 5: "The Crying Game" (†).

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: Through March 25: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon). From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).

Theatre 3: "Howards End" (James Ivory).

FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)

Theatre 1: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).

Theatre 2: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 3: "A Few Good Men" (Rob Reiner).

Theatre 4: "Untamed Heart" (†).

Theatre 5: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 6: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

GEMINI 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.

Theatre 2: "Sommersby" (Jon Amiel), with Richard Gere and Jodie Foster.

BECKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"Rich in Love" (†).

NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Falling Down" (†).

Theatre 2: Through March 25: "Fire in the Sky" (†). From March 26: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"The Last Days of Chez Nous" (†).

TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Ethan Frome" (†).

EAST 85TH STREET, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Fire in the Sky" (†).

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson. From March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.

Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

ORPHEUM VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)

Theatre 1: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 2: "Just Another Girl on the I.R.T." (†).

Theatre 3: "Falling Down" (†).

Theatre 4: Through March 25: "Mad Dog and Glory" (†). From March 26: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).

Theatre 5: Through March 25: "Swing Kids" (†). From March 26: "Watch It" (†).

Theatre 6: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).

Theatre 7: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "CB4" (†).

Theatre 2: Through March 25: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon). From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.

Theatre 3: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 4: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 5: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 6: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 7: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 8: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 9: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 10: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 11: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 12: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 13: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 14: "The Crying Game" (†).

Theatre 15: "The Crying Game" (†).



Liam Neeson and Patricia Arquette in "Ethan Frome."

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Theatre 1: "Garden of Scorpions" (1991, directed by Oleg Kovalov; in Russian).

Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.

Theatre 3: "Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media" (Mark Achbar and Peter Wintonick).

WAVERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: Through March 25: "Rich in Love" (†). From March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.

Theatre 2: "CB4" (†).

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

Theatre 2: "Mad Dog and Glory" (†).

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "Reservoir Dogs" (Quentin Tarantino).

Theatre 2: "Indochine" (†).

Theatre 3: "Riff-Raff" (Ken Loach).

Theatre 4: Through March 25: "Family Prayers" (Scott Rosenfelt), with Joe Mantegna. From March 26: "Masala" (†).

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

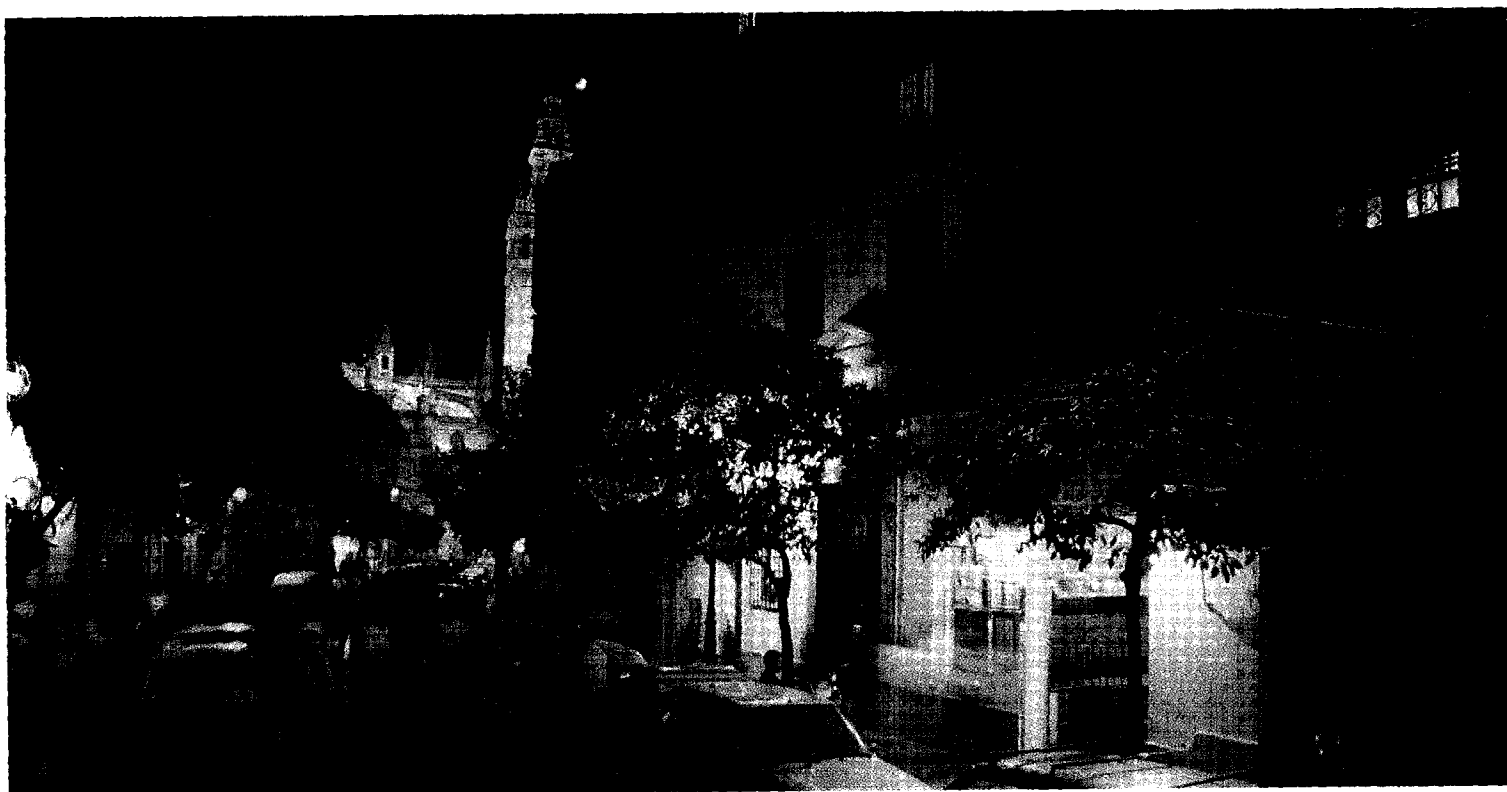
Theatre 1: "Falling Down" (†).

Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).

Theatre 3: "Passion Fish" (†).

Theatre 4: "Groundhog Day" (†).

Theatre 5: "The Crying Game" (†).



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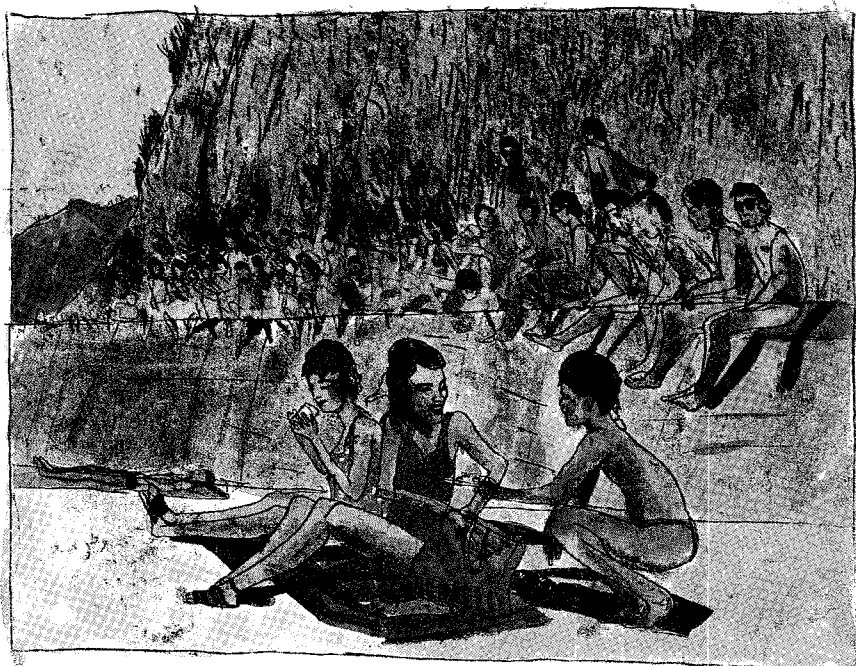
The Official Card for Tourism in Spain.

MOVIE HOUSES-Cont'd

Theatre 6: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).
 Theatre 7: Through March 25: "Rich in Love" (†). From March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.
 Theatre 8: "Mad Dog and Glory" (†).
 Theatre 9: "Falling Down" (†).
23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
 Theatre 1: "CB4" (†).
 Theatre 2: (Matinees only) "Aladdin," an animated film; and (evenings only) "Untamed Heart" (†).
 Theatre 3: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon).
GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
 "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon).
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
 Theatre 1: "Sommersby" (Jon Amiel), with Richard Gere and Jodie Foster.
 Theatre 2: "Scent of a Woman" (†).
 Theatre 3: "Family Prayers" (Scott Rosenfelt), with Joe Mantegna.
 Theatre 4: "Enchanted April" (Mike Newell), with Joan Plowright.
 Theatre 5: "A Few Good Men" (Rob Reiner).
 Theatre 6: "Groundhog Day" (†).
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
 "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).
FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
 "Passion Fish" (†).
57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
 "Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey" (Duwayne Dunham).
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
 Theatre 1: "Mac" (John Turturro).
 Theatre 2: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
ANGELIKA 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
 "El Mariachi" (†).
FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
 "The Lover" (Jean-Jacques Annaud).
CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
 "Howards End" (James Ivory).
COLUMBUS CIRCLE, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
 Through March 25: "Unforgiven" (†).
 From March 26: "Married to It" (Arthur Hiller).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
 Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson.
 From March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
 Theatre 1: "Tous les Matins du Monde" (Alain Corneau, in French).
 Theatre 2: "Indochine" (†).
 Theatre 3: "The Crying Game" (†).
 Theatre 4: "Strictly Ballroom" (†).
 Theatre 5: "Olivier Olivier" (Agnieszka Holland, in French).
 Theatre 6: "Il Ladro di Bambini" (Gianni Amelio, in Italian).
REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
 "Scent of a Woman" (†).
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
 Theatre 1: "A Far Off Place" (Mikael Salomon).
 Theatre 2: "Falling Down" (†).
 Theatre 3: "Groundhog Day" (†).
 Theatre 4: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III" (Stuart Gillard).
 Theatre 5: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.
 Theatre 6: "Fire in the Sky" (†).
METRO CINEMA I AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
 Theatre 1: "Untamed Heart" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Mad Dog and Glory" (†).
OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
 Theatre 1: "Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey" (Duwayne Dunham); and "Malcolm X" (Spike Lee), with Denzel Washington.
 Theatre 2: "CB4" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
 Theatre 1: "Just Another Girl on the I.R.T." (†).
 Theatre 2: Through March 25: "The Bodyguard" (directed by Mick Jackson), with Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston. From



Takehiro Nakajima's "Okoge," at Film Society of Lincoln Center (at MOMA).

March 26: "Hear No Evil" (Robert Greenwald), with Marlee Matlin.
 Theatre 3: "Falling Down" (†).
 Theatre 4: Through March 25: "Sniper" (Luis Llosa). From March 26: "The Opposite Sex and How to Live with Them" (Matthew Meshekov, with Arye Gross).
 Theatre 5: "Best of the Best 2" (Robert Radler).
 Theatre 6: "The Crying Game" (†).
 Theatre 7: "Point of No Return" (John Badham), with Bridget Fonda.
EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
 Through March 25: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye), with Nicolas Cage and Samuel L. Jackson.
 From March 26: "Born Yesterday" (Luis Mandoki), with Melanie Griffith, John Goodman, and Don Johnson.
EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
 Theatre 1: "Aladdin," an animated film.
 Theatre 2: "Untamed Heart" (†).
 Theatre 3: Through March 25: "Swing Kids" (†). From March 26: "Amos & Andrew" (E. Max Frye).
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
 "Fire in the Sky" (†).
NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
 Theatre 1: "CB4" (†).
 Theatre 2: "Mad Dog and Glory" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
 "The Queen" (1968, directed by Frank Simon), a film of a transvestite pageant.
THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
 March 24: "If..." (1969, Lindsay Anderson), with Malcolm McDowell; and "This Sporting Life" (1963, Anderson), with Richard Harris and Rachel Roberts.
 March 25: "The Dead Zone" (see page 33); and "Dead Ringers" (1988, David Cronenberg), with Jeremy Irons.
 March 26-27: "Midnight Cowboy" (1969, John Schlesinger), with Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight; and "The Graduate" (1967, Mike Nichols), with Anne Bancroft, Hoffman, and Katharine Ross.
 March 28: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carné, in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault.
 March 29: "Le Jour Se Lève" (1939, Marcel Carné, in French), with Jean Gabin; and "Bizarre, Bizarre" (1937, Carné, in French).
 March 30: "This Gun for Hire" (1942, Frank Tuttle), with Veronica Lake and Alan Ladd;

and "The Glass Key" (1942, Stuart Heisler), with Brian Donlevy, Lake, and Ladd.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER (AT MOMA)—An international festival of new films by new directors. March 24 at 6: "Passages" (Yilmaz Arslan, Germany). . . . ¶ March 24 at 9: "Tito and Me" (Goran Markovic, Yugoslavia and France). . . . ¶ March 25 at 6 and March 27 at noon: "Our Twisted Hero" (Park Chon-Won, South Korea). . . . ¶ March 25 at 9 and March 27 at 3: "The Peach Blossom Land" (Stan Lai, Taiwan). . . . ¶ March 26 at 6 and March 28 at 3: "Vermont Is for Lovers" (John O'Brien, United States). . . . ¶ March 26 at 9 and March 28 at 6: "Original Sin" (Takashi Ishii, Japan). . . . ¶ March 27 at 6 and March 28 at 9: "Combination Platter" (Tony Chan, United States). . . . ¶ March 27 at 9 and March 28 at noon: "Virginia" (Srdjan Karanovic, Yugoslavia and France). . . . ¶ March 29 at 6 and March 30 at 9: "Okoge" (Takehiro Nakajima, Japan). . . . ¶ March 30 at 6: "Cows" (Julio Medem, Spain). (11 W. 53rd St. For information, call 875-5610.)
WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—March 24 at 2 and 7: "Excuse Me, Are You For or Against?" (1966, Alberto Sordi; in Italian). . . . ¶ March 24 at 4:45 and 9:30: "Why?" (1971, Nanni Loy; in Italian), with Sordi. . . . ¶ March 25 at 2, 4:15, 6:30, and 8:45: "The Room" (1970, Sordi, in Italian) and "An Intelligent Vacation" (1978, Sordi; in Italian). . . . ¶ March 26 at 2 and 6:45, March 27 at 2 and 6:30, March 28-29 at 2 and 6:45, and March 30 at 2: "Notturmo" (1988, Fritz Lahner; an Austrian film, in German). . . . ¶ March 30 at 7 and 9: "Oedipus Rex" (1993, Julie Taymor).
JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-0824)—March 26 at 6:30: "Stepbrothers" (1957, Miyoji Ieki; in Japanese), with Rentaro Mikuni, Yaeko Toyoshima, and Kinuyo Tanaka; and "Yellow Crow" (1957, Heinosuke Gosho; in Japanese), with Chikage Awashima and Tanaka.
FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—March 24 at 3 and 6:30: "Chantons Sous l'Occupation" (1976, André Halimi; in French), a documentary.
SYMPHONY SPACE, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—March 30 at 6:30: "Last Tango in Paris" (1972, Bernardo Bertolucci; in French and English), with Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider. . . . ¶ March 30 at 9: "In the Realm of the Senses" (1977, Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese), with Eiko Matsuda and Tatsuya Fuji.

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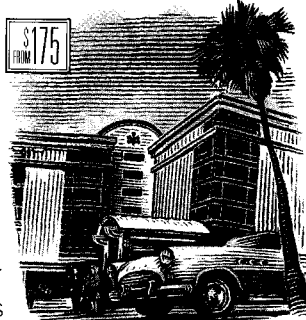
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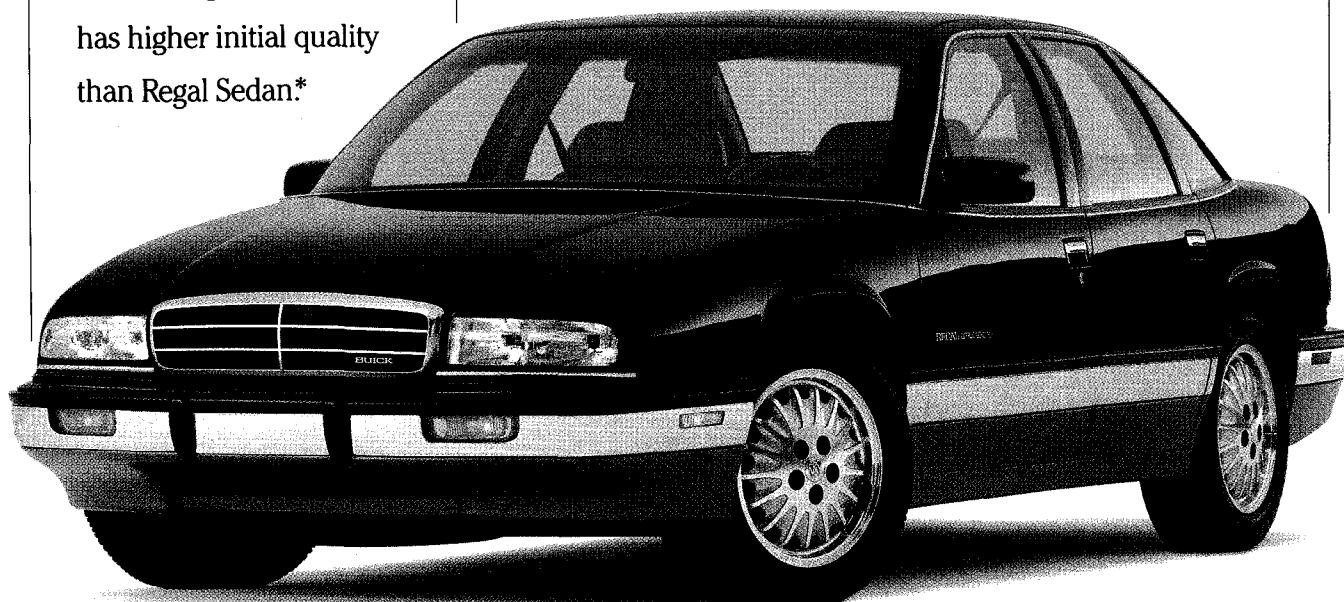
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MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Man of Vision

WHEN the cult director David Cronenberg ("Naked Lunch") brings his fanged sensibility to accessible stories and lets his actors tear into their parts, everybody gets satisfied—especially the audience. His 1983 movie of Stephen King's "The Dead Zone" (playing March 25, at Theatre 80 St. Marks) may not be in the same class as his 1986 remake of "The Fly," but Christopher Walken, in the lead role of a tormented psychic, is as fascinating to watch as Jeff Goldblum in the later, more celebrated movie. Walken's character, a teacher named Johnny Smith, emerges from a five-year coma as a paranormal superhero. He has the power to see the future and to ferret out past secrets. He's also a victim: his fiancée (Brooke Adams) married another man during Johnny's unconscious half-decade. And he's a bit of a martyr, too: each time he has a vision, he loses physical strength. Walken's "normal" range of emoting has always been far out, and here he seems to throw his consciousness to the camera the way a ventriloquist throws his voice to a hand puppet. In several frightening trance scenes, his throbbing, spooky-eyed expressions blend eerily well with Cronenberg's hyperbolic visuals. Walken never lets up, despite Jeffrey Boam's clunky script. Johnny teaches Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"; Walken plays Johnny like Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman rolled into one. He's his own worst nightmare.

(The following notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

CB4—At first, this hit-or-miss, baggy-pants parody takes the form of a documentary-in-the-making about a trio of "gangsta rappers" led by scrawny Chris Rock. These three mild suburban guys strike it rich only after Rock assumes the identity of a jailed racketeer and dubs his group CB4 (for Cellblock Four). Don't expect "This Is Spinal Rap." The documentary concept peters out and the film becomes a frantic farrago: the real crime boss (Charlie Murphy, Eddie's brother) struggles to get back his identity, and a publicity-craving Reaganite politician (Phil Hartman) condemns CB4 as a corrupting force. The director, Tamra Davis, graduated from music videos, and the writers include "Saturday Night Live" regular Rock, black-culture journalist Nelson George, and Robert LoCash. Their inside job doesn't have enough good inside jokes. From its two-faced burlesque of baby-macho sexuality to its depiction of pampered kids (black and white) as gangsta fans, the picture tells you everything you already knew about rap (and didn't have to ask). With Allen Payne and Deezer D. as Rock's co-rappers, Chris Elliott as A. White (the "rapumentary" director), and Khandi Alexander as a groupie.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street East Twin, Waverly, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and National Twin.)

THE CRYING GAME—This amazing new movie by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Miracle") has the sure grip and the unstoppable momentum of a dream. Jordan tells the story of Fergus (Stephen Rea), a troubled I.R.A. gunman who undergoes a thorough emotional metamorphosis, and he makes the hero's change of heart moving and persuasive; the film inspires an irrational sort of trust, a willing suspension of something deeper and more fundamental than disbelief. The script is full of reversals and abrupt dislocations and, halfway through, the movie springs a huge, jaw-dropping surprise. Disorienting us isn't the ultimate aim of Jordan's artistic strategy, though; he jars us out of our accustomed responses to prepare us for the purer, more penetrating ones he really wants from us. The picture is a splendid entertainment—an elating, charmed sprint through all sorts of contemporary terrors. Also with Jaye Davidson.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/16/92.) (Angelika Film Center, Sutton, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Criterion Center.)

ETHAN FROME—With Liam Neeson, Patricia Arquette, and Joan Allen; directed by John Madden. (Reviewed in this issue.) (19th Street East 6, and Tower East.)

FALLING DOWN—A crude vigilante picture disguised as social satire. The conceit is that American society is rigged against the average guy, and the movie means to entertain us with the spectacle of Joe Normal's revenge on his enemies—that is, on both those who are beneath him and those who are above him on the class scale. The middle-class hero (played with monotonous intensity by Michael Douglas) walks away from his car in a freeway traffic jam and sets out to cross Los Angeles on foot, arming himself as he goes—first with a baseball bat wrestled away from a Korean grocer, and later with artillery abandoned by gang members—and everyone who gets in his way winds up paying a price, from employees in a fast-food restaurant to fat-cat golfers. The movie evokes the self-pitying "silent majority" rhetoric of the Nixon era; that appalling sentimentality about one's own beleaguered and underappreciated virtue. It's no small feat to turn a sociopath into a martyr, but the director, Joel Schumacher, and the screenwriter, Ebbe Roe Smith, are up to the challenge.—T.R. (3/8/93) (Village Theatre VII, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

FIRE IN THE SKY—Who is the U.F.O. abductee Travis Walton? As portrayed in this big-screen docudrama, he could have walked out of the Monty Python song that goes "He's a lumberjack and he's O.K." The screenwriter, Tracy Tormé, characterizes Travis (D.B. Sweeney) as a dreamer among loggers—when a timber crew confronts an alien spacecraft in a northeastern-Arizona forest, Travis dances into the light and gets space-jacked. Only a fraction of the movie sketches Travis's ordeal with the extraterrestrials. Most of it chronicles what happens when he disappears for five days and the townsfolk suspect his co-workers of foul play. It's a yokel version of "An Enemy of the People" capped by an alien primal scene: flat-faced creatures examining Travis with instruments as fearsome and baroque as those of the mad doctors in "Dead Ringers." The overqualified cast includes Robert Patrick as Travis's buddy and crew chief, James Garner as a skeptical state investigator, and Kathleen Wilhoite. Craig Sheffer, the bad boy in the bunch, wins the heartiest viewer response by expressing contempt for the American Gothic milieu. Robert Lieberman directed.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza. . . ¶ 19th Street East 6, and New York Twin; through March 25.)

GROUNDHOG DAY—An above-average Bill Murray vehicle, directed by Harold Ramis from a script by Ramis and Danny Rubin. The star plays Phil Connors, a burned-out TV weatherman who wakes up one morning to discover that he's stuck in time—condemned to relive, endlessly, Groundhog Day in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. The picture goes on a little too long, but Murray's inventiveness keeps it lively even during its less inspired stretches. The fundamental, deliberate monotony of the conception actually serves to highlight his skill at comic riffing. The movie feels like a spontaneous one-man jam session, and you sense that Murray can play all night, just for the fun of finding out what else he might come up with. He fools around as if there were no tomorrow.—T.R. (2/22/93) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

INDOCHINE—The director, Régis Wargnier, uses his star, Catherine Deneuve, largely for her classical, indomitable profile—the same attribute that made her the 1985 model for the French national symbol, "Marianne." Indeed, in this wannabe epic about the waning of French Indochina, Wargnier reduces all his actors and characters to symbols: Deneuve, as a French plantation owner who's lived in Indochina all her life and carries on the spirit of pioneer colonialism; lovely Linh Dan Pham, as Deneuve's adopted daughter, an Annamese princess who becomes a revolutionary leader; and blank Vincent Perez, as a confused French naval officer who wows both mother and child, sparking romance and rebellion. This monument-like picture lacks urgency and staying power—the material oxidizes onscreen. With vistas by cinematographer François Catonné that should increase the tourist traffic in Vietnam and Malaysia. In French.—M.S. (Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

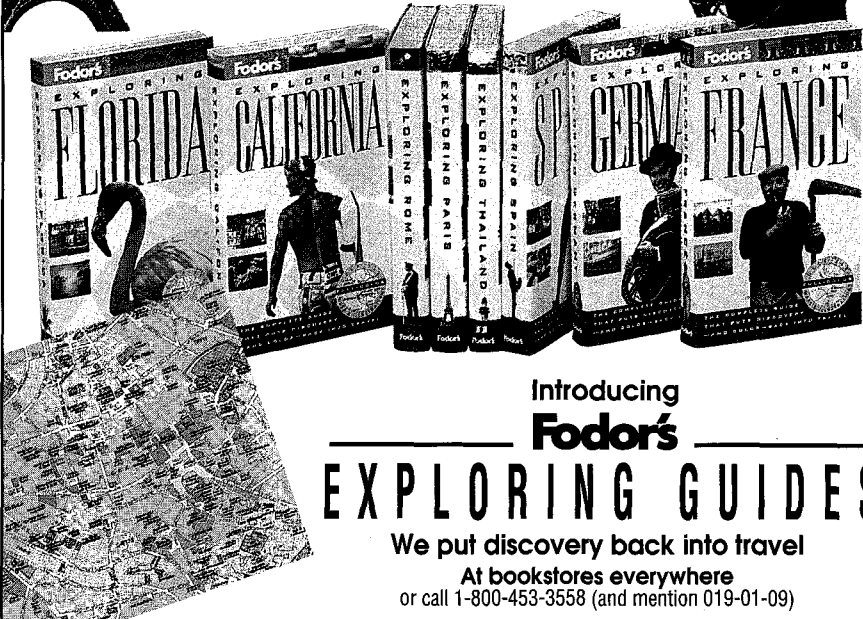
JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE I.R.T.—The heroine of Leslie Harris's debut feature is a black inner-city teen-ager named Chantel (Ariyan Johnson), and the film means to demonstrate that kids like her can't be reduced to a stereotype. For maybe the first three minutes, you feel the thrill of anticipation, a sense that you're about to get an entirely fresh perspective on urban experience. But after the opening sequence, which is edited to the hip-hop rhythm of a number by the female rappers Nikki D and Cee Asia, the movie starts to go wrong. As a storyteller, Harris moves to the beat of the same old drummer which usually sets the tempo for earnest low-budget independent movies; she leads the heroine, and the audience, on a forced march from lesson to lesson. Chantel is less a person than a counter-stereotype, and Harris uses her according to the didactic need of the moment. Sometimes Chantel is a positive-image icon, sometimes a cautionary figure; she's always a statement of some sort. The filmmaker's eye for the nuances of behavior isn't sharp, and scene after scene is ruined by faulty observation; Harris is in such a hurry to get through the lesson plan that she garbles messages that shouldn't be difficult to put across clearly and forcefully. (The messages that do come through aren't always welcome; a classroom sequence in which Chantel argues with her Jewish history teacher is unmistakably anti-Semitic.)—T.R. (3/22/93) (Village Theatre VII, Orpheum VII, and Criterion Center.)

THE LAST DAYS OF CHEZ NOUS—In a ramshackle Sydney household, an Australian family gets on with its life, but only just. Beth (Lisa Harrow) starts to lose her French husband, J.P. (Bruno Ganz), to the attentions of her sister Vicki (Kerry Fox); meanwhile, her



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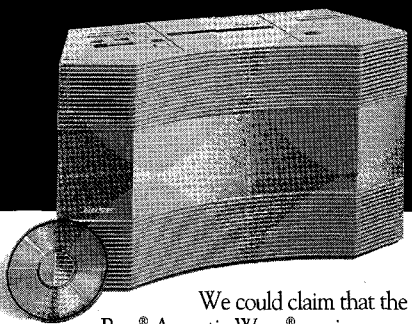
IN BRIEF-Cont'd

daughter Annie (Miranda Otto) is falling quietly for Tim (Kiri Paramore), their lodger with the crewcut and the sense of humor. Gillian Armstrong's new movie is a worthy successor to "My Brilliant Career" and "High Tide"; if anything, it feels even more mobile, charting every shift in the emotional climate. It's hard to pin down just what kind of work it is: jokes at the dinner table can turn nasty and upsetting, but people also recover quickly, and sometimes dance without warning. It's a true ensemble movie: none of the performances are vain or showy—Harrow in particular braves all manner of self-exposure, so we can see the fear beneath her strength. This fluent, hopeful comedy (and it is a comedy, for all the encroachments of sadness) is Armstrong's best movie to date.—A.L. (3/1/93) (Village East Cinemas, and 68th St. Playhouse.)

MAD DOG AND GLORY—A strange and unsuccessful brew stirred up by screenwriter Richard Price and director John McNaughton. Love comes to a lonely cop called Wayne (Robert De Niro) when he saves the life of a Mafia smoothy (Bill Murray), who offers him a week's worth of Glory (Uma Thurman) by way of reward. Unlikely plots can be fun, but only if everybody is prepared to pitch in; this one feels graceless and trumped-up, and not even the spirited efforts of Bill Murray can kick it into life. McNaughton is looking for something else, and he spends the whole film not getting there: it sets off violently, tries a few jokes, changes tack to a mooching sadness, and finally settles for an old-style punch-up. Only great directors can cram this many tones into a movie and make all of them tell, and McNaughton (who previously made "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer") doesn't qualify. De Niro seems to be putting on a show rather than lighting his character up from the inside, although he does have a couple of convincing scenes with Uma Thurman; moviegoers may have forgotten just how nervy and maladroit screen lovers can be.—A.L. (3/15/93) (34th St. East, Coronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin. . . .) Orpheum VII; through March 25.)

EL MARIACHI—This first film by twenty-four-year-old Robert Rodriguez was made for seven thousand dollars, and part of its enormous charm is that it really looks like a seven-thousand-dollar movie. It's a grubby little thriller, set in a Mexican border town, about a wandering mariachi musician (Carlos Gallardo) who is mistaken for a killer. The picture is a virtually unbroken series of chases and shoot-outs, and the non-stop action should be tiresome, but it isn't. Rodriguez establishes a delirious pace, and keeps the bullets flying and the corpses crumpling for a brisk, and appropriately terse, eighty-two minutes. The movie has the sort of dry, bracingly unwholesome humor that relentless mayhem can produce if the characters are mean and abject enough and the storytelling is speedy and laconic. This young filmmaker is no visual wizard; he's just an energetic and imaginative manipulator of tried-and-true genre conventions. But if you enter his seedy world with expectations as low as the picture's aspirations, you'll probably have a very good time. In Spanish.—T.R. (2/22/93) (Village Theatre VII, and Angelika 57.)

MASALA—Middling karma. The title, a Hindi word for a spicy, colorful mixture, is an unfortunately familiar one for a comedy about Indian immigrants in North America (Canada this time, not Mississippi). It's also unfortunately apt. The writer-director-star, Srinivas Krishna, uses his first-hand knowledge of the Indian-Canadian community—and his grasp of Bombay musicals, teen-rebel movies, and "My Beautiful Laundrette"—to ladle a lumpy multicultural marinade over a story of an alienated youth. Krishna himself plays the hard-luck lead—also named Krishna—who loses his immediate family in a plane crash and becomes the odd man out in his extended clan. Krishna the moviemaker hops through time and space and breaks into



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bouts of mystical comedy, striving in vain to make a virtue of confusion—his own as well as his character's. Happily, there's yet another Krishna involved: the rascally deity Lord Krishna (Saeed Jaffrey), who appears to a feisty grandmother (Zohra Segal) via her VCR. In their hilarious duel of wills, Jaffrey's divine imp and Segal's determined matriarch are surprisingly well matched. According to Krishna's view of Indian-Canadian family life, a grandma can guilt-trip even a god. Jaffrey appears in two additional roles (a sari tycoon and a postman who's also a stamp collector); his daughter, Sakina Jaffrey, plays Krishna's love interest.—M.S. (Quad Cinema; starting March 26.)

PASSION FISH—Eighteen years ago, John Sayles might have boiled down this back-to-basics portrait of a paralyzed, bitter white soap star (Mary McDonnell) and her strong-willed black caretaker (Alfre Woodard) into a twenty-page short story. But as a movie writer-director-editor, he lets himself gas on about it for two and a quarter hours. Sayles has an ear for regional accents and colloquial dialogue, and an eye for quotidian details. But he's better on nuts and bolts than he is on heart and soul. Sayles predictably alternates scenes of rehab drama and female friendship with comic relief and local (Louisiana) color. Only David Strathairn and Vondie Curtis-Hall cut through the monotony as the heroines' earthy admirers. Those who've seen Sayles' bit in "Matinee" promoting the ant-man horror movie "Mant" might hope that the title creatures in this film will turn out to be imaginative hybrids, too. No such luck—they're simply little fishies attached to big metaphors.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Festival.)

RICH IN LOVE—Bruce Beresford's movie is a coming-of-age story about a white teen-ager, Lucille Odom (Kathryn Erbe), living in Charleston, South Carolina. The crises that force her to grow up and figure out who she is happen at a rather leisurely pace—the poky, gone-fishin' tempo that writers and filmmakers tend to drift into when they set up south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Beresford and his team (many of whom worked on "Driving Miss Daisy") know the territory well. Maybe too well: there's something practiced about the movie's Southernness. The cast includes Albert Finney, Piper Laurie, Suzy Amis, Kyle MacLachlan, Alfre Woodard, Ethan Hawke, and Jill Clayburgh; these appealing actors do their best to keep the picture ambling along, from the standard-issue domestic crisis it begins with to its contentedly undramatic resolution. (Amis, as Lucille's flamboyant older sister, is the standout.) The movie, like the Josephine Humphreys novel that it's based on, is gentle and quirky and suspiciously ingratiating; it's so bent on charming us that it refuses to grow up, to become much of anything. Its modesty preens. Screenplay by Alfred Uhry; cinematography by Peter James.—T.R. (3/22/93) (Beekman. . . ¶ Waverly, and Chelsea Cinemas; through March 25.)

SCENT OF A WOMAN—Director Martin Brest and screenwriter Bo Goldman labor mightily to design a holiday-season heart-warmer about a middle-aged blind man and a troubled teen-ager (Chris O'Donnell), but fortunately their low intentions are undone by the star, Al Pacino, whose performance taps emotions too complex and too frightening to be resolved by the simple moral victory that ends the picture. His Frank Slade, a retired Army officer and former aide to L.B.J., is a bitter, misanthropic, profoundly depressed man, and the actor makes us feel the full weight of the character's hopelessness. This is acting that chills the heart beyond any possibility of warming. The filmmakers may dismiss the audience with a banal lesson written on the blackboard—"Smell the roses" is the gist—but by the end we're not paying much attention. We're still sorting out the ambiguities and uncomfortable truths that Pacino's great performance has let us in on.—T.R. (12/28/92-1/4/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency.)

STRICTLY BALLROOM—Baz Luhrmann's first film brings good news: Australian cinema is on the move again, with a vigor not seen since the days of "Mad Max." There's no violence in "Strictly Ballroom"—the general lack of unpleasantness, in fact, is quite unnerving—but the speed of it still leaves you reeling. A young dancer, played by Paul Mercurio, acquires a new partner (Tara Morice), dreams up a flash routine, and sets out to break the Old Guard. The plot is cut-rate melodrama, and Luhrmann knows it; but he never sneers at his hero's ambitions. Besides, there are so many other things to laugh at—the costumes, the minor characters with their major obsessions, the psychedelic makeup, the trashy music. The movie is over before you know it, and is not one to linger in the mind, or indeed pass through the mind at all; but it's a good-humored ride for the senses, never too sickly, and who can say no to that?—A.L. (2/15/93) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

SWING KIDS—It promises to explore life in the Third Reich in a bold new way—by dramatizing the rift between teens who jitterbugged to American black and Jewish jazz stars and teens whose hearts belonged to Hitler. Everything about the music and dancing is exciting, from music-producer Robert Kraft's snappy reconstructions of swing hits like "Sing Sing Sing" to Otis Sallid's wonderfully uninhibited choreography. Robert Sean Leonard and Christian Bale sparkle on the dance floor; their characters' best friendship registers when they Lindy—but not when they banter. Jonathan Marc Feldman's heavy-handed script centers on Leonard's struggle to grasp the humane ideals of his late father while staving off the influence of his pragmatic mother (Barbara Hershey), her Gestapo protector (Kenneth Branagh), and Bale, who becomes an ardent Hitler Youth. Feldman and the director, Thomas Carter, try and fail to refract the whole swing-kid

ern is the sixteenth film Clint Eastwood has directed, and by far the best. The canny script, by David Webb Peoples, revives the old story about the retired gunfighter (Eastwood) who picks up his firearms again for one last score. But there's no easy resolution, and the movie is stronger because of its loose ends: the filmmakers acknowledge that the bloody chaos of an outlaw's life can't be settled in two hours and eleven minutes. The action begins when a cowboy slashes the face of a prostitute, and her co-workers pool their money to offer a reward for the murder of him and his partner. Jaimz Woolvett is the upstart who enlists Eastwood in the bounty hunt. Morgan Freeman plays Eastwood's longtime partner, Gene Hackman a megalomaniac sheriff, Richard Harris a flamboyant English gunslinger, and Saul Rubinek a dime novelist. This is the finest set of performances ever to grace a Clint Eastwood movie, and this time Eastwood even does a good job directing Eastwood. Every bullet in this movie matters; under its leathery hide is a genuine compulsion to de-romanticize Western gunfighting.—M.S. (8/10/92) (Village East Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6. . . ¶ Columbus Circle; through March 25.)

UNTAMED HEART—A young man with a weak heart (Christian Slater), who works in a crummy diner, gets noticed by a lonely waitress (Marisa Tomei). You can guess the rest, but that doesn't detract from the mild, in-offensive pleasure of Tony Bill's film. The love story takes second place to the casual comedy that surrounds it—bored girls sitting around talking about boys. One of them is played by Rosie Perez, who's a natural at this kind of thing; but even her perkiness is put in the shade by Tomei, who brings startling high spirits to a dullish role. She snatches moments of happiness out of the air and shares them out to anyone who's around. The title, by the way, refers to some weird story about the hero's past—he thinks his heart came from a monkey but the film



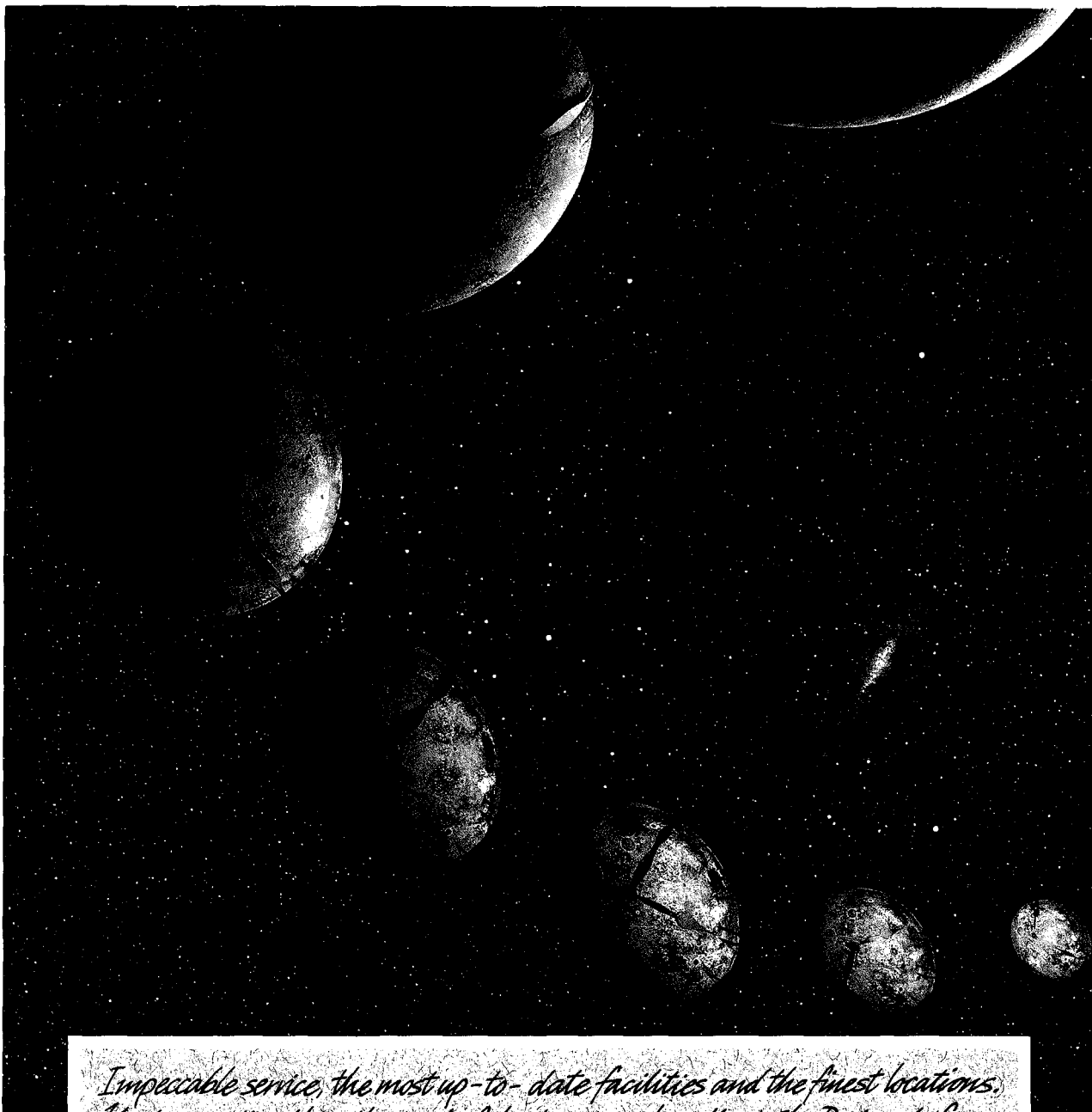
At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Rachel Roberts and Richard Harris in "This Sporting Life."

movement through the hero's crisis of conscience. Leonard's coming of age takes precedence over everyone else's suffering—a blunder of taste and judgment. Long before the "Camelot" finish, the picture loses its pulse; it needed more *Down Beat* magazine and less downbeat dramaturgy.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas. . . ¶ 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Embassy; through March 25.)

UNFORGIVEN—Set in eighteen-eighties Kansas and Wyoming, this engrossing, moody West-

skids around this in confusion. On the other hand, he does look a bit of an ape; O.K., love is love, but you still wonder what Tomei is doing with him.—A.L. (2/15/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Embassy. . . ¶ 23rd St. Wet Triplex. Evenings only.)

WATCH IT—With Peter Gallagher, Suzy Amis, John C. McGinley, Jon Tenney, Cynthia Stevenson, Lili Taylor, and Tom Sizemore; directed by Thomas Flynn. (Reviewed in this issue.) (19th Street East 6, and Orpheum VII; starting March 26.)



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

OFF THE CUFF

ABRAHAM HIRSCHFELD, the new boss of the *Post*, has his own large, oval office now. It is on the sixth floor of the paper's South Street building, and has a sweeping view of the East River. Mr. Hirschfeld has the face of a dazed old comedian, and his skin looks as if it had been soaked in water, then dried out, away from the sun. His red hair is going to gray, and it hasn't been combed in a while. He has a publisher's big desk, of polished wood, with brass handles on the drawers. Except for the press clippings about him, its surface is still uncluttered. He doesn't yet know how to work the office phone. When it rings, he leans over it, holds up an unlit Te-Amo cigar butt, and stares at the buttons. "I'm having so many problems with it," he says.

Mr. Hirschfeld is a short man. Sitting in the publisher's padded chair, he looks bemused and temporary, like a conventioneer lost in a strange hotel. His new newspaper has called him a "fat landlord," among other things, and he seems thrilled. He searches, with small hands, for a copy of that famous edition.

Holding it to the light, he flips from page to page. "WHO IS THIS NUT?" reads the page-3 headline. Mr. Hirschfeld calls the edition "historic," and its big sales "a miracle." "The press!" he cries. "I love 'em! I love 'em!" He made his fortune building multistory garages, and says he knows next to nothing about journalism. He takes two-hour lunches every day, and likes to play gin for small change at the Friars Club, on East Fifty-fifth Street.

He was born in a Polish village called Tarnow, and still speaks with a heavy accent. "There have been cameras here today from all over," he says. "At least fifty cameras. They call me from all over the world, and they'll pay me anything to come on their televisions with my ideas. At about two-thirty, who shows up? Abe Rosenthal, from the New York *Times*. Do you know what? He told me this was the first time, in his lifetime, that he was ever in this building. He asked some questions, took some notes. I don't know what he's going to do with it. That's the gamble!"

Mr. Hirschfeld has had a reputation locally for having erratic ideas and for behaving erratically. He is famed for

spitting at people who displease him—most famously at a female newspaper reporter in Miami. "I should have spit on her publisher instead of her," he says now. Outside his office window, tugboats are going by. He says he owns health clubs and hotels, and is helping to bankroll a revival of the musical "Hair" in London. His heroes are Bobby Kennedy, Harry Truman, and Ronald Reagan, in that order. Behind his desk is a bright-red poster of the *Post*'s founder, Alexander Hamilton. "Don't worry, your newspaper is in good hands!" the poster announces. "I am an American," Mr. Hirschfeld says. "I tell you this off the cuff." He is wearing a rumpled gray suit, and is waving a book of matches in the air as he talks. On his feet are a tiny pair of black Reeboks. When he is asked if running the *Post* will take all his time, he says, "Nehh."

LOCAL HERO

EARLIER this month, a Mass was held for the Cuban-born journalist Manuel de Dios Unanue, at St. Joan of Arc Church in Jackson Heights, commemorating the first anniversary of his still unsolved murder. It was followed by a candlelight procession through the



PETER KUPER

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"This one is for converting a military base into a crafts center."

streets of the Queens neighborhood known as Little Colombia, which ended at a small, grassy triangle at the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and Eighty-third Street, with the unveiling of a plaque that bore Manuel de Dios Unanue's name. The triangle is just across the street from the restaurant Mesón Asturias, where, a year before, at about 9:15 P.M., de Dios had been sitting at the bar, and two shots from a 9-mm. automatic pistol were fired into the back of his head by a man wearing a hood; the man had come in unobtrusively, and he simply walked out, quietly and calmly, and disappeared down Roosevelt Avenue's busy commercial strip.

The "hit" bore the signature of the *sicarios*, hired assassins of the Medellín and Cali Colombian drug cartels. Manuel de Dios was well known in Hispanic New York as a tireless crusader against the narcotics trade. From 1984 to 1989, he had been the editor-in-chief of *El Diario-La Prensa*, the city's oldest and largest-circulation Spanish-language newspaper; then he had published a pair of magazines, *Crimen* and *Cambio XXI*,

and for a time he'd had his own radio show, titled "What Others Will Not Say." Within twenty-four hours of his murder, headlines across the nation were proclaiming him a fallen hero of the drug war. Suspicion fell immediately upon the Colombian cartels and their accomplices along Roosevelt Avenue.

Several months later, Leslie and Andrew Cockburn, writing in *Vanity Fair*, described a different Manuel de Dios: a man who made enemies at every turn; a vain, quixotic, and delusional figure whose reporting grew reckless well before he lost his job at *El Diario*; a newsman who traded information with the D.E.A. and the C.I.A., and who betrayed his own sources; a man who, in the words of one of his closest associates, was "looking for the fucking bullet." The article implied that the Colombian cartels were unlikely to have ordered the murder, because de Dios was an insignificant threat, and it suggested that information de Dios had about a Puerto Rican political scandal, or long-standing enmity toward him among rightist Cuban groups, was a more probable motive

for the murder. The Cockburns' assessment of de Dios's character was endorsed on the anniversary of his death by his old newspaper.

All of which perhaps gives some idea of why, among nine hundred and twelve Yahrzeit Tumbler Candles stacked in nineteen cartons of four dozen each at the back of St. Joan of Arc Church, no more than two hundred were needed for the candlelight procession following the memorial Mass; and some idea of what was being implied when, during the Mass itself, Vicky Sánchez, de Dios's former compañera and the mother of his three-year-old daughter, Melody, said from the pulpit, in a barely audible voice, "I thank the few friends who still remember Manuel for their presence in this sacred house."

These were true believers in what his supporters had called the Martyr of Truth, and they evoked yet another side of Manuel de Dios. Among men in raincoats wearing black armbands and women in parkas, and a few in fur coats, were many former members of La Alianza Iberoamericana, a now defunct organization that had brought Hispanics of the New York area together for an array of comparatively staid activities. Here, as in the glory days of his early years as editor of *El Diario*, Manuel de Dios was the charismatic and indispensable leader. The group offered legal advice, sponsored soccer teams and chess clubs, threw Halloween parties for children, and organized flea markets to help pay for it all—flea markets at which de Dios himself was the most energetic and persistent vender.

In interviews given to both the English- and the Spanish-language press, Vicky Sánchez has defended de Dios's honor with dignity and perseverance. She has called on Mayor David Dinkins to appoint a special investigator for the case. And she has repeatedly denounced what she sees as police apathy, accusing the Police Department of regarding de Dios's death as just one more among many unsolvable murders within Queens' insular drug world.

Recent newspaper reports suggest that the police have gone back to suspecting what they did at the beginning: that de Dios's murder was ordered by "businessmen" based in Queens. Simply because Cali or Medellín regarded Manuel de Dios as insignificant doesn't

mean that Queens merchants who launder money did, too. "Even a child could figure that out," Sánchez says. "I'm convinced of it, and I've been saying it since they killed Manuel de Dios. The assassins are in our neighborhood."

That is what mattered to the couple of hundred people who, accompanied by a phalanx of police and several television cameras, marched through the streets of Little Colombia. It was a windy, bitter-cold night, in which it was impossible to keep the candles lit. As the procession turned down Roosevelt Avenue, beneath the sporadic thunder of the elevated No. 7 trains, and past warmly lit Colombian restaurants, the salsa night clubs that don't open until three in the morning, and the hangouts of *jibaros* (drug dealers) and *sicarios*, the marchers were carrying cardboard signs that bore messages like "Manuel de Dios: All the Good People of the City Stand with You"—that one carried by a man named Ricardo. There was one sign, Ricardo said, that everyone had been too frightened to carry, but in the end his wife, Elizabeth, had agreed to do so. "KILLER," it read, in big block letters, and below, "of Manuel. We will not stop until we find you."

After speeches by several city politicians, Vicky Sánchez unveiled the plaque. "Manuel de Dios Unanue Triangle," it read, in gold letters against a shiny green backdrop and the leaf symbol of the Parks Department. Behind the microphone, Sánchez leaned forward into the lights, and, in a soft, fragile voice, said, "These are the kinds of things that make this sad day less sad."

The crowd was dispersing. Someone had put a wreath of flowers next to the plaque. An elderly mourner named Carlos, who had a long white mustache and a sad-eyed, dignified demeanor, stepped forward, holding the sign that nobody had wanted to carry—the sign with the word "KILLER" printed across—and set it down next to the wreath and the plaque. Then he turned away, leaving the message for the strip's late-night phantoms to contemplate.

THE EMMET WOMEN

AT Borghi & Company, at 26 East Eightieth Street, an exhibition of paintings, watercolors, and drawings executed by several generations of women

PETER KUPER

ONE MAN'S BLIZZARD

THE day after the Blizzard of '93, my yard, in suburban New Jersey, looked so good, with drifts like meringue lapping at the shrubs, that I wanted my real-estate agent to come over and make a video. But I would have had to edit out the driveway. A long hill, half gravel, half cracked asphalt, it has never been one of the house's best features, and now it resembled an Arctic strip mine.

The snow was cruelly hacked and gouged, with black stains from exhaust and tire treads, and it receded from the street in four distinct glaciations—evidence of four attempts at excavation. If you took a core sample of this tundra, you'd find striations of snow, sleet, hail, frozen rain, and more snow. You might also find my wallet, which is frozen in there somewhere: Encino wallet. I lost it by accident—I was horsing around with my teen-age son—but the episode now seems to me a good metaphor for homeownership: you bury a bunch of money and hope that sometime you'll find it again.

I started digging at around eleven Saturday morning, when about six inches of snow had collected and, filled with euphoria, polished off the whole driveway in a couple of hours. Then I rashly took the car out for a test spin. I almost skidded off the road twice, and the visibility was so bad that I briefly drove onto a highway exit ramp by mistake. By the time I got home, the driveway had acquired a couple of inches of new stuff—just slick enough to propel me into a drift near the garage. So I shovelled again, and then I got in the car and rocked back and forth and burned rubber for a while, until I was able

to claw my way to the end of the driveway. I left the car there and walked into town, only to find that the video store, that lifeline of suburban civilization, had been picked clean.

That night, I shovelled once more, but I gave up after twenty feet or so. Every shovelful felt as heavy as mud. I went to bed and slept fitfully, waking a couple of times to the sound of sleet

lashing at my windows, and at one point I dreamed a homeowner's dream: the cat was chasing a bird through the house.

When I got up, around eight, the sleet had changed back into snow, there was a fresh four inches or so on the driveway, and bits of feather were strewn on the bedroom rug.

Sometime during the night, it turned out, the kitchen door had blown open, admitting the bird, along with a snowdrift and several hours' worth of frigid air. The furnace, which had been wheezing all night, trying to keep up with the extra demand, now clanked and expired. Outside, there were other clanking noises—snowplows dragging past and burying the hood of the car—and from down the street came the chug of snowblowers and the whine of spinning tires. The suburban concerto. I went out and dug a canyon through to the street. Then my wife and I cleaned up the bird mess, and made a great-looking fire in the fireplace. In a little while, the furnace man came, and charged me much less than I'd dreaded. I slept dreamlessly that night, and the next morning I rode the bus into the city, past dozens of abandoned cars and a couple of jackknifed trailer trucks. My driveway extended all the way to Manhattan.

—CHARLES MCGRATH



members of the Emmet family is on view until April 16th. The work is of high quality, but what adds mightily to its interest is the family from which the art has sprung; for almost two hundred years now, the Emmets have been throwing off remarkable characters, perhaps more often in the female line than in the male. At the opening of the show at the Borghi, an army of Emmets and Emmet cousins exchanged affectionate greetings and, in some cases, admired pastel likenesses of themselves in infancy. With an immodesty permissible to age, one white-haired family member waved toward a canvas and exclaimed, "What a pretty young creature I was, was I not?" And indeed she had been, dressed in her Edwardian finery.

Present at the opening was Ellen

Emmet Rand II, named for her grandmother the portrait painter Ellen Emmet Rand (1875-1941). A graduate of Sarah Lawrence and a resident of Brooklyn, Ellen II contrives to combine painting with the operation of a small catering business. The first of the Emmet women to become an artist was Ellen II's great-great-grandmother Elizabeth Emmet Le Roy, born in Dublin in 1794. Elizabeth's father, Thomas Addis Emmet, was the older brother of the Irish patriot Robert Emmet, who was hanged in 1803 for leading an insurrection against the British Crown. Thomas Addis Emmet, having been found guilty of playing a lesser role in the insurrection, was imprisoned for several years in Scotland. He and his family emigrated first to Paris and then

to New York City, and here he became a leading member of the bar.

By the age of ten, little Elizabeth Emmet was much esteemed for her drawings, and until she died, at eighty-four, she was still standing every day at an easel and ardently painting away. Her brother's daughter-in-law Julia Colt Pierson Emmet became an artist under the tutelage of Daniel Huntington; she produced ten children and scores of canvases. The next generation of Emmets boasted five women artists: Rosina Emmet Sherwood, Lydia Field Emmet, Jane Emmet de Glehn, Ellen Emmet Rand, and Edith Leslie Emmet. Only Edith Leslie is missing from the current show.

Ellen II has a gallery to herself at the Borghi; all twenty of her paintings are of nudes, and all the nudes are females. "I'm not trying to make a statement about men versus women or women versus men," she says. "It just happens that women are curvier than men, and I like to paint curves."

BIOGRAPHERS' LUNCH

PATRICIA BOSWORTH, who is the author of biographies of Montgomery Clift and Diane Arbus and has been at work on a biography of her father, Bartley Crum, for the last seven years, recently had the idea that it might be nice if a group of biographers could gather now and then and commiserate, perhaps over lunch at the China Bowl, a midtown restaurant. She broached the notion to her fellow-biographer James Atlas (Delmore Schwartz, and at work on Saul Bellow), who loved the idea of the lunch but hated the idea of the China Bowl. As a result, the Biographers' Lunch took place recently in another midtown establishment, the Harvard Club. In addition to Ms. Bosworth and Mr. Atlas, the lunchers included James Gleick, Eileen Simpson, Jim Miller, Walter Isaacson, Jean Strouse, Alan Brinkley, Judith Thurman, Susan Cheever, Katherine Clinton, and Deborah Solomon.

After half an hour or so of listening to the conversation, which was friendly, relaxed, and filled with anecdotes and personal observations about the craft of biography, and of watching the faces of those present, one began to wonder



"They say that if she starts playing with her earrings you're dead."

what it is, exactly, that draws one person into the life of another. Mr. Gleick (Richard Feynman) joked that he was at the lunch under false pretenses, because he was never going to do a biography again. Afterward, he explained his sentiment. "My book took five years, which by current biographical standards is the blink of an eye," he said. "But I wasn't prepared for what happens to your psyche when you spend that long tunnelling further and further into someone else's life. Here was someone I had never met in real life, and in some ways I knew him better than I knew my wife or my parents, and yet there is so much I won't ever know, which is frustrating. One gets taken over by this other person to the extent that I would sometimes be getting dressed for an occasion and I would think, Well, what would my subject wear? And then I would recoil and think, Wait a second, I still have a life!"

The personalities of the twelve biographers gathered for lunch seemed well intact, and yet, as the conversation went on, the individual names of the biographers blurred, while their subjects remained vivid. Perceived this way, the lunch became an answer to that often posed question "If you could invite anyone in history for lunch, who would it be?"

This group was a fine and eclectic one. It included Henry Kissinger and Benjamin Franklin and maybe even Elvis Presley (all three speaking through the voice of Walter Isaacson, who had written a book on Mr. Kissinger and had arrived at the Harvard Club thinking he was about to begin work on a book on Benjamin Franklin but had been cajoled into momentarily considering Elvis). Also present were Delmore Schwartz, John Cheever, Colette, Jackson Pollock, Alice James, Michel Foucault, Richard Feynman, Henry Luce, Isak Dinesen, and a group of Poets in Their Youth.



"Unfortunately, Lance can't be here tonight to accept this award. But it's a thrill and an honor for me to accept it on his behalf on my way over to his place with his small onion and pepperoni."

As the biographers chatted, one couldn't help sensing the ghosts of their subjects hovering above them.

The topic of honesty came up very early. Mr. Atlas (Delmore Schwartz) lamented what he referred to as "the Rashomon effect," but then Mr. Gleick (Richard Feynman) opined that "people don't have to tell the truth to be useful."

Walter Isaacson (Henry Kissinger) grimly stated that "almost every document regarding foreign policy in the American archives was written to mislead someone," and, as a result, interviewing was essential.

Jim Miller (Michel Foucault) replied that he prefers hard documents to interviews, because "people reinvent the past," but Judith Thurman (Isak Dinesen, Colette) pointed out that the minute someone begins to write about himself or herself with posterity in mind it changes everything. "That is what's wrong with those French diaries," she said.

"It's the process of turning the self into a commodity," Mr. Miller said.

"But candor seems definitely on the rise," Mr. Atlas said.

"Candor is not enough," Eileen Simpson (Poets in Their Youth) said. "If you talk about all the people J.F.K. slept with, you have to make an attempt to understand it."

"There are some things about my family that will never be said," Susan Cheever stated.

"Like what?" Mr. Atlas asked, with a mixture of curiosity and skepticism.

Alan Brinkley (Henry Luce) commented that "there is a difference in the value of knowing about the sex life of a creative individual versus that of a political figure."

Ms. Thurman suggested that Mr. Brinkley title his book "Hanging Luce."

"But don't inner demons create public actions?" Ms. Cheever asked.

Mr. Isaacson replied, "Kissinger's relationship with Jill St. John need not be understood to understand his public actions."

"What about all those missile crises?" Mr. Atlas asked. ♦

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PROFILE

THE KING OF THE DEAL

On Oscar night, Hollywood will once again flock to the party thrown by Irving Lazar, the legendary agent who, at eighty-six, still outflanks the competition.

BY MICHAEL KORDA

THE first time I remember hearing Irving Lazar's name was in 1950, at Eden Roc, on the Cap d'Antibes. "Nobody who matters calls Lazar Swifty," my Uncle Alex warned me. "He *hates* the bloody name." Lazar was then in his forties, I suppose, and was already an internationally famous superagent in the Myron Selznick-Leland Hayward tradition. (He had been christened Swifty by Humphrey Bogart after making three deals for Bogart in one day on a bet.) Lazar was standing on the other side of the pool, an incongruous, diminutive figure among all the half-naked, oiled, and bronzed bodies. He was totally bald, and his face, or what could be seen of it below huge, glittering gold-rimmed aviator sunglasses, was tanned to the color of a well-cared-for crocodile handbag. He was wearing white shoes, a blue blazer, and white trousers so perfectly pressed, despite the heat, that he looked like a shiny, expensive beach toy that has just been unpacked from its box beneath the Christmas tree by some lucky child. He was shouting into a telephone.

About eight years later, I had just begun work as an editorial assistant at Simon & Schuster when one day Lazar called me on the phone. "Meet me for lunch, my dear boy," he said grandly. "I'm not doing any business with your shop, and I want to know why." I found it hard at first to decipher his meaning. He seemed to be affecting an English accent, and for a moment I thought he

might be making fun of me. "I do business with Bennett Cerf," he said, with a trace of irritation. "I do lots of business with Tom Guinzburg, at Viking." His voice was full of slow, rolling English vowels, as if he were making a speech in the House of Lords. "I don't know why I'm not doing any fucking business with Simon & Schuster," he suddenly snapped, as sharply as the crack of a

whip, reverting to his natural accent, an impatient Brooklyn Jewish growl.

"Where?" I asked, reminding myself not to call him Swifty. My publishing lunches had so far consisted of sandwiches at my desk. Editors rolled back from lunch on a sea of Martinis at three o'clock in those days, but where they'd been I had no idea.

"'21,' for christ-sakes, where do you think?" Lazar said. "One o'clock."

I said goodbye into a dead telephone, for Lazar had already hung up. As I was to discover, this was his trademark. When he is finished speaking to you, he goes on to his next call without a pause.

At "21," I had only to mention Lazar's name to be treated like royalty. I was swept to a red-checked table downstairs, opposite the bar, and given a bowl of celery and olives on ice and a basket of rolls. From time to time, as I ate the rolls, a captain arrived bearing bulletins from Lazar. Mr. Lazar had called to say that he would be on his way shortly. Mr. Lazar's secretary had called to say that Mr. Lazar was just leaving. Mr. Lazar's secretary had called again to say that Mr. Lazar was actually out the door. Mr.



A Hollywood wit once remarked, "Everybody who matters has two agents—his own and Irving Lazar."

Lazar's California office had called to ask Mr. Lazar to phone as soon as he reached "21."

At one-forty-five, three-quarters of an hour late—by which time I had emptied the basket of rolls—there was a bustle at the entrance of the bar, and Lazar appeared, faultlessly dressed, as ever, now in a checked suit of the kind worn in England for attending the more fashionable race meetings. I waved to him, but he was busy scanning the room like a theatre manager counting the house before raising the curtain. He plunged off to shake hands with everybody he knew, moving around the room in a slow, counterclockwise semicircle.

What I was witnessing was table-hopping as an art form. At some tables he paused for only a few moments, at others he stayed for a few minutes, at one or two he actually sat down to chat. There was hardly a table in the room at which there wasn't somebody Lazar recognized or from which somebody didn't wave to him. It was two o'clock when he sat down next to me, glanced at the table, and snapped at the captain, "Why aren't there any rolls on the table, chrissakes?" He shook my hand. "You don't look like your uncle," he said, eyeing me. "He was a big fellow."

I didn't think a conversation about height with Lazar was likely to lead anywhere—as it happened, I was sensitive about the fact that I was the shortest member of my family—so I said nothing.

Lazar picked up the menu, took off his glasses, removed a gold-rimmed monocle from his breast pocket, put it in place, and studied the menu, holding it an inch or two away from his nose. "I want breakfast," he said. "Scrambled eggs with smoked salmon." He turned to me and said, "I got a late start this morning." I wondered whether this was his way of apologizing for being late, but nothing in his manner suggested that it was. "I mixed up my pills," he explained. "I took my wake-up pill last night and my sleeping pill when I got up this morning." He turned toward the captain, who was hovering beside me. "He'll have a '21' Burger, medium," he said, dismissing him with a wave while I was still looking at my menu. Lazar, as I was to learn, hates people who can't make up their minds about what they want to eat (or anything else), and is very likely to order for them if they aren't quick enough to suit him.

He settled himself down, sipped his virgin bullshot—the first time I had ever heard of this drink—and looked at me warily, as if he were wondering who I was and why I was sitting there. Behind thick glasses, his eyes were shrewd and penetrating, with the kind of beady stare that a macaw might bring to bear on you just before lunging to bite your finger. His head was completely bald—I wondered if he shaved it every day. It also looked as if he polished it, perhaps with something like Butcher's Wax. "You're younger than I thought," he said, the corners of his mouth turning down suspiciously, as if I had somehow deceived him on that score. "Do they let you make deals over there?"

I said they did, though it wasn't really true—not deals of the kind that Lazar was famous for, anyway.

He nodded, then leaned conspiratorially toward me. "I'm going to give you a piece of advice you'll thank me for the rest of your life, kiddo," he said. It was the first time anybody had ever called me "kiddo"—a word I had until then only associated with tough-guy movies.

I stared back at him, eager for any piece of wisdom that might get me out from behind an assistant's desk and into an office of my own.

"Never forget this," he told me, his expression making it clear that I was not to take his advice lightly. "The first million bucks you make—put it away! You don't ever touch that, you hear me? That's your 'Fuck you' money. That way, anybody ever tries to make you do something you don't want to do, you can tell 'em, 'Fuck you.'"

Since at the time I was making a hundred and twenty-five dollars a week and had zero in my bank account, Lazar's advice seemed of doubtful utility, though it clearly represented a deeply felt credo on his part. Over the years, he was to give me much more advice from his personal experience, ranging from "Always try to have fun, kiddo" to "Be a mensch when you tip." This last I received at that first lunch, when Lazar rose from the table at the end of the meal to continue table-hopping, and, without asking whether I had an expense account (I didn't), left me to pay the bill. It taught me at least one useful truth about book publishing: the editor always picks up the check, never the agent.

In some mysterious way, however, our lunch together placed me firmly on Lazar's daily list of people to call, and I have remained there for thirty-five years. Once a day, I pick up the phone and hear him rasp "Lazar here. What's cookin', kiddo?" or "What have we got going, kid?"—followed by a bewildering series of high-speed sales pitches. These, too, are sometimes interrupted by advice or reflections on life, my favorite being "Sometimes I wake up in the morning and there's nothing doing, so I decide to *make something happen by lunch*."

This, in fact, is as close as anyone has come to explaining Lazar's way of doing business. The moment he is awake, he gets on the phone and proceeds to make something—anything—happen, mostly by trolling a series of celebrity names until whatever editor he is speaking to takes a nibble at the bait. One learns early on—I did, anyway—that these names might as well be picked out of a hat, since Lazar seldom bothers to inform celebrities and stars before offering up their names to publishers. "How about Cary Grant?" he might say. "Cary could write a great book. Give me, oh, say, a million, and he's yours, I won't even mention him to anybody else. Well, better make that a million and a half. He's big in England, and he's dying to do it. . . . Greg Peck, how about him? Gene Kelly? I saw Gene last night, give me half a million right now and he's yours."

This is basically Lazar's way of getting his day started, very often from the breakfast table by his pool, in Beverly Hills—the equivalent of finger exercises for a concert pianist. Only if he got a good, solid bite would he call Cary Grant or Gregory Peck or Gene Kelly—or, nowadays, Madonna, Cher, Sharon Stone, or Jessica Lange, for Lazar always keeps up with the rise and fall of stars. If nobody bites, the names are shuffled to the bottom of his list for the next day's calls. Only large, round numbers are mentioned, and one also learns that, as at auctions, it is dangerous to express polite interest. Lazar is only too likely to interpret anything less than an emphatic "No!" as agreement, and will then angrily insist that you've made an offer, and hold you to your word.

As I began, tentatively, to make a few deals with Lazar—Garson Kanin, Larry



Collins, and Dominique Lapierre—I learned that his client list apparently included everyone. A Hollywood wit once remarked, “Everybody who matters has two agents—his own and Irving Lazar.” But Lazar does not consider himself an agent at all; he describes himself as a “dealmaker,” and thus does not feel bound by the normal rules of agenting, which limit agents to making deals only for their own clients. Lazar will make a deal for anyone and, later on, work out a more or less amicable arrangement with whoever the agent may be. Sometimes he takes his ten per cent from the buyer, sometimes from the seller—sometimes, it was rumored in the old days, from both. He has frequently offered me authors who, to the best of my knowledge, were happily placed with rival publishers and were represented by more conventional agents.

“Truman Capote,” Lazar said, way back at the beginning of our relationship. “Wanna do a deal with him?” At the time, Capote was high on the best-seller lists, and was one of the bright stars at Random House, while I was an unknown junior editor at a house not then famous for fiction. It seemed to me unlikely that Capote would want to leave Random House, or that Random House would let him go, and I said so. “I can see you don’t have the guts for this kind of thing, sonny,” Lazar sniffed—he always called me “sonny” when he was pissed off—and he hung up, no doubt to offer Capote elsewhere. (Capote was still a Random House author when he died.)

I learned that such offers often came about because Lazar was having a feud with a certain house or editor. If he wasn’t happy with Random House, he would offer Capote around, probably without telling Capote; if somebody at McGraw-Hill had offended him, he tried to steal Vladimir Nabokov away. This practice hasn’t changed over the years; it gives Lazar a chance to test the waters and check the market value of a best-selling author—a tactic that drives more sedate agents wild, since Lazar often tells their clients that he could have got them a better deal.

Capote, as it happened, was the accidental centerpiece of one of my more memorable lunches with Lazar. I had

made a date to meet him at the Grill Room of the Four Seasons at one o’clock, and begged him to be on time, since I had a meeting at two-thirty. “Sure, sure,” he said, with the slightly offended tone of a man who is never late. “One o’clock on the dot, kiddo.” Needless to say, at one-thirty I was still waiting for him, while bulletins of his progress were brought to me. Finally, he arrived, did his tour of the room, sat down, and looked at me. “You ought to relax more,” he said. “A young guy your age, you shouldn’t look so stressed.”

I was about to point out to him that he was the cause of my stress, but just as the captain was handing Irving a menu a small man in a purple velvet jumpsuit and a matching purple hat appeared at the table, looking like nothing so much as an aging pixie. “Hello, Irving,” he said.

Lazar looked up impatiently. “I’m not speaking to you,” he said.

Capote—I instantly recognized him—sat down. He looked as if he were about to cry. “Don’t be angry with me, Irving,” he said. His voice was as high-pitched as a bird’s.

Lazar glared at him unforgivingly. “You turn up late for a sitdown dinner at my house. You bring along some piece of rough trade you’ve picked up from a gas station along the way as your date. I don’t want to see you anymore.”

“I said I was sorry.”

It was beginning to dawn on me that I might as well not be there. Lazar did not introduce me to Truman Capote. Capote ignored me completely. It was nearly two o’clock and we still hadn’t ordered.

“All right, all right,” Lazar said gruffly. “I forgive you, but it’s the last time.”

“I promise. Let’s get together while you’re in New York.” The two men pulled out identical

Hermès pocket diaries and Cartier gold pencils, put on their reading glasses, and peered at the week ahead, where, it turned out, neither of them had a free moment.

“Lunch with Jackie, cocktails with the Paleys, dinner at the Bombolanas—you know them, Irving, surely. That’s it for Tuesday,” Capote said.

Lazar studied his own diary as if it were the Rosetta stone. “Lunch with the Princess Borbón y Parma, cocktails with

Marietta Tree, dinner at Lenny Bernstein’s—that’s it for Wednesday.”

At last, after spirited negotiation, they managed to settle on a date for dinner and, with even greater difficulty, on a place, and Capote finally took his leave. Lazar sat back contentedly. I guessed that he felt his social schedule had one-upped Capote’s, though the two seemed to me equally star-studded. “You know who that was?” he asked. “That was Truman Capote.”

“So I gathered.”

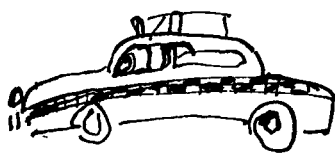
Irony is wasted on Lazar. He leaned close to me, and whispered. “I’m going to tell you something about Truman that not many people know,” he said. He paused significantly. “Truman’s a fruit.”

THERE is, I discovered over the years, a curious innocence about Lazar, despite his cynical exterior—a romanticism that comes to the surface by fits and starts. It is not just his occasionally old-fashioned slang—surely nobody had used the word “fruit” to describe a homosexual since the thirties—but a certain innocent attitude toward his friends. He refuses to believe the worst about anyone he knows. People who everyone else agrees are totally loathsome, Lazar professes to like. Couples who are on the brink of divorce he maintains are devoted to each other. He stoutly insists that known lesbians are happily heterosexual. Eventually, I came to understand that Lazar simply refuses to believe that people close to him can be upset, or miserable, or unpleasant. Like the Sun King, he believes that his presence makes people happy, and therefore takes unhappiness as a kind of *lèse-majesté*.

Lazar is a famously generous host, his generosity exceeded only by his unpredictability. He once invited my wife, Margaret, and me to a black-tie dinner at his home—a sitdown dinner for sixty people, many of them the kind of stars about whom it’s often said, “You’re kidding, I didn’t know he was still alive!”

“I’ve got a surprise for you, kiddo,” he said to me. “You’ll never guess who you’re seated next to.”

My heart sank. Francis X. Bushman, maybe? Was he still alive? Just as we were about to sit down, a woman appeared and sat down on my right. Lazar called for silence and said, “This is a spe-



cial moment, because Merle Oberon is going to be sitting next to her nephew, Michael Korda, and they haven't seen each other for years!"

Poor Merle stared at me in horror as everyone applauded, not so much because we didn't like each other as because the notion of having a thirty-year-old publisher as a nephew hardly fit in with her youthful public image.

For a long time, I thought that Lazar had a taste for practical jokes, and that my reintroduction to Merle after twenty years might be one, but I eventually came to the conclusion that it was part of his innocence. Because he never remembers the bad things about people, he is very likely to seat ex-wives next to ex-husbands, or old enemies

next to each other, having no exes of his own. He also appears to have no enemies, unless you count germs.

Dirt is Lazar's only fear and his legendary obsession. If there is any truth to the Freudian notion that people who suffer from germ phobia and constantly wash their hands are afflicted with unbearable feelings of guilt, Lazar would have to be the guiltiest man on earth, but guilt is absolutely foreign to his spirit. Once, I've been told, when he was being driven to East Hampton for the weekend by his hostess, he surprised her by producing a carefully typed list of the hospitals along the route—not, as she supposed, because he was afraid of having a heart attack but in case he had to go to the bathroom. Hospitals, he explained, had clean bathrooms; he couldn't use a bathroom in a gas station. It's said that in the forties Lazar was discovered one night trapped in the men's room of Chasen's with Howard Hughes, another germ-phobic. They had both washed and disinfected their hands and were waiting for someone to come along and open the door; neither one of them was willing to touch the handle. I was once sent to find him when he left a meeting at Simon & Schuster to go to the bathroom and was gone for nearly half an hour. "Maybe he's ill," Dick Snyder, my boss, said, with genuine concern. "You'd better go see what's happened." When I opened the door, I found Lazar washing his hands at the sink, having carefully covered every square inch of anything he might touch with paper towels, so that the men's

room looked like one of Christo's more ambitious works.

It is not just dirt that presents Lazar with difficulties. His life is arranged around precise requirements, and he has never been one to forgive any failure to fulfill them. Friends who choose other agents when it comes time to write their memoirs have encountered his not inconsiderable wrath, and, while he does not generally hold grudges, his motto is not exactly 'Forgive and forget,' either. One of his favorite stratagems is appealing to your respect and friendship for him. It is not the *book*—or the prospect of a book, since there is seldom anything in writing—that you are bidding for but Lazar's opinion of you.

If you fail to give him the offer he wants, he takes it as a personal insult. In fact, his favorite phrases in negotiating are "You've got to do this for me, kiddo" and "You've got to help me out."

A few years ago, I received a call from Lazar from the pool of Oscar de la Renta's house in the Dominican Republic. (Lazar's year is organized in the form of a series of regularly scheduled progresses, like those of Queen Elizabeth I: he moves from Christmas at Oscar de la Renta's, with the Kissingers, back to Los Angeles for his Oscar party, then to the bullfights in Spain with Peter Viertel, and ends—or did in the old days, before Irwin Shaw's death—with skiing in Switzerland.) "I've been talking to Kissinger," he told me. "He wants to write a big book on diplomacy. I haven't told this to anyone else yet, so talk to Dick and get back to me with an offer right away. And make it good. I told Henry you guys would give me a terrific deal, so don't let me down."

Lazar had apparently told Kissinger across the de la Renta dinner table that he could get him twice as much money as Kissinger thought the book was worth. Honor was now at stake, and it was up to us, as Lazar's friends, to prove him right. As it turned out, Dick Snyder and I came up with exactly the number Lazar had promised Kissinger, so everybody was happy. The day I got back to the office, however, I received a call from Marvin Josephson, the courtly head of International Creative Management (my own agency for many years), asking what was all this about his client wanting to



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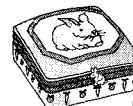
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write a book on diplomacy. The contract, Josephson explained, would have to be drawn up with I.C.M.

I called Lazar in the Dominican Republic. He was unruffled. Of course Kissinger wasn't his client—he had never said Kissinger was. He was just putting together a deal for a friend, in the spirit of Christmas. I should draw up the contract with I.C.M., he said. All he wanted out of it was his ten per cent. I saw a gulf opening up before me. "What about I.C.M.'s ten per cent?" I asked.

"What about it?" Lazar said impatiently. Of course I.C.M. would get ten per cent. They were Kissinger's agents.

"But that adds up to twenty per cent," I pointed out. "Who pays the extra ten?"

"You do, kiddo," Lazar said. "You think Henry's going to pay two commissions? I get ten per cent for bringing you the deal."

I wasn't sure how I was going to explain this to Dick. "Wouldn't it make more sense to split the commission?" I suggested hopefully. "Five for you, five for I.C.M.?"

There was a long silence, and for a moment I thought the line had gone dead. "You've still got a lot to learn, sonny," he said.

ODDLY, it never occurred to me that Lazar was old, even when he reached his eighties and began to gallop toward his nineties. Since in his view I was either "kiddo" or "sonny," our relationship was a constant—he the grown-up, I the child. As I became more successful (and branched out into writing, as well as editing), Lazar's attitude toward me never varied. He was delighted for me, but I was still "kiddo" and always would be. Nor did Lazar seem to age. His energy was—and is—phenomenal, even frightening. No amount of parties, including his own, can exhaust him, or can blunt his appetite for sociability.

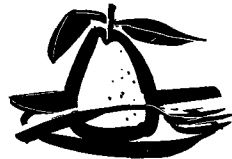
I had always thought of Lazar as a kind of finished product—born somehow already wearing his Savile Row suit and gleaming handmade shoes—so it came as a surprise to me when, one day in 1975, I was having a sandwich with him at his house in Beverly Hills and saw in his den a framed photograph of him as a boy, with a full head of hair, standing in front of a nineteen-twenties

delivery truck and looking remarkably self-possessed.

"Is that you?" I asked.

Lazar glared at me. "Yes, it is," he said. "Now sit down and eat."

There was also a photograph of Lazar as a brash young M.C.A. agent, already bald, but pudgy, not at all the trim figure I was accustomed to; one of Lazar in uniform, a serious expression on his face; and even one of him as a baby. Of course, one knew he had *been* a baby, but over the years he has so cocooned himself in legend that his past has become



almost indecipherable. It's not, one suspects, that Lazar has any secrets to hide, or even that he is ashamed of his past. It's just that, unlike the present, the past is no longer in his control. That his father was a relatively prosperous Russian-Jewish butter-and-egg wholesaler in Brooklyn (who did a little modest loan-sharking on the side) is nothing to be ashamed of, and Lazar isn't ashamed—he just wants to establish his own version of events. He seems, in fact, to have had a happy childhood—three brothers, a doting mother, and a father who served as a role model.

In his later years, Lazar looked back on his childhood with the kind of nostalgia that successful self-made men always develop for their roots. He has a whole repertoire of childhood anecdotes: stories about how he had to learn to be tough, because he was the smallest boy in school; stories about how he fought full-grown teamsters for the best parking place at the market every morning for his father's truck; stories about how he learned to dress elegantly from the neighborhood gangsters. This was the era of the Jewish gangster, when guys like Abner (Longie) Zwillman, Jake (Greasy Thumb) Guzik, and Legs Diamond controlled the streets and the rackets. Two themes dominate all of Lazar's stories about growing up: fighting back and standing out from the crowd, and a longing for a richer, more genteel way of life, apparently inspired by summer visits to more prosperous relatives who lived in the country.

Lazar has always been obsessed by class. I sometimes used to fly out to California and back the same day, and once I stopped off at Lazar's house before going on to LAX to catch the red-eye home. On this particular occasion, I

had apparently overdone things, and even Irving noticed that my eyelids were drooping. (Never tired himself, he is not usually aware of fatigue in others.) "Why not take a nap?" he suggested, and I gratefully bedded down on a sofa in his dressing room. I awoke to find the room in darkness. Stumbling to the nearest door, I opened it, and realized that I was looking at Lazar's closet. Row after row of clothes were hanging there—yachting outfits, dinner jackets, blazers, sports clothes. At my feet rows of tiny shoes were lined up, each with its own wooden shoetree—there seemed to be hundreds of pairs, for every possible social and sporting occasion. In glass-fronted cupboards against one wall, Lazar's shirts were arranged by color and pattern—hundreds of them. I felt like an intruder, but I was also reminded, inevitably, of Gatsby, and especially of the scene in which Daisy bursts into tears at the sight of his shirts.

It is no accident that the very worst thing Lazar can say about anyone is "He's got no class." This is invariably said more in sorrow than in anger, and with a certain judiciousness, as if Lazar were the final arbiter in the matter. "Class," of course, means more than making *una bella figura*. Class in Lazar's eyes is an attitude, and usually centers on lavish generosity, coupled with being a man of one's word. His house is full of symbols of that special lavishness which passed for class during his heyday as a Hollywood agent. Every surface is covered with silver cigarette boxes engraved with effusive messages of thanks and affection from Lazar clients, and there are enough desk fittings and clocks to stock Asprey or Tiffany. Then autocracy and largesse were the rule. Lazar dealt as an equal with titans like Sam Goldwyn and Louis B. Mayer and Darryl F. Zanuck: men who not only were worthy opponents but could make their own decisions and didn't mind paying for what they wanted; men who were not, in a favorite phrase of Lazar's, "nickel-and-dimers." Those days, as Lazar never ceases to lament, are long gone, and now he has to deal with book editors and movie executives who report to committees, bid cautiously, and never send anything to celebrate a deal.

IT was probably a yearning for class that prompted Lazar to go to law school instead of joining the neighbor-

hood gangsters or staying in the family business. He graduated from the Brooklyn Law School of St. Lawrence University in 1931, but he soon figured out that as the lawyer for a vaudeville star like Ted Lewis (Mr. "Me and My Shadow") he made a hundred dollars a week, whereas M.C.A. was taking ten per cent of Lewis's ten thousand dollars a week. To this day, when he's faced with lawyers, he seldom fails to point out that he is a lawyer himself, and he did practice bankruptcy law for a few years after law school. But, like Billy Rose, he seems to have made his mark mostly as the quick-witted and ambitious assistant to older men, taking shorthand (a man's job in those days), running errands, establishing a name for himself as a bright young man around the courthouse. A good head for numbers and an already legendary amount of chutzpah brought him into the talent business when it was still in its infancy, and consisted of booking musicians and acts in the Catskills, on the still flourishing vaudeville circuit, and in the mob-owned night clubs, speakeasies, and jazz joints of New York's East Fifties. It may be that Lazar regarded all this as a step toward some more respectable profession, but it didn't take long for him to discover that he was good at what he was doing—for already he was fiercely competitive, unhappy at being a subordinate, and absolutely fearless. In later years, people have wondered at Lazar's ability to stand up to studio heads, publishers, and difficult clients, but the fact is that his early experience was with people who were perfectly willing to have him beaten up or killed—and, in fact, he *was* beaten up, and even stabbed, in the course of business, yet he never felt intimidated. In an industry in which it has become fashionable for agents and executives to flaunt tough-guy talk, though, Lazar never indulges in gangsterisms—he has done business with guys who never said that kind of thing unless they meant it.

Lazar made his first trip to the Coast in 1936. He claims that it was by accident, but there are no accidents in Lazar's life. It's true that he accompanied two vaudeville clients out there because he didn't trust them to pay him his commission—he preferred to divide up the take at the end of every day himself—but it's likely that he had been looking westward for some time. In

New York, show business took a back seat to the bigger, more serious worlds of finance, the media, old money, and society. In Hollywood, show business was everything; society, class, finance all revolved around the studios. Still, there was never any question of Lazar's becoming a mere "ten per center," one of those despised Hollywood talent agents who figured so largely in the movies and popular fiction of the period. Lazar's roots remained in New York, and he kept them here. What's more, he cleverly avoided becoming a "flesh peddler." He made deals for such people as Noël Coward, Tennessee Williams, Cole Porter, Clifford Odets, Maxwell Anderson, Lillian Hellman, Garson Kanin, and Ernest Hemingway. He sold books, plays, ideas, and people by going to the top from the very first—a feat made possible not only by his toughness and determination but by the simple fact that he was an outsider, a New Yorker.

Lazar understood instinctively that the prevailing ethos of West Coast movie people was then (as it is now) fear and envy of New York. New York was where the money came from; it was where the *owners* of the studios were—the bosses to whom men like Mayer and

Zanuck actually reported. New York was, above all, where talent, ideas, culture, and fashions came from, and in the days when it took nearly four days to cross the country a person arriving from New York was greeted like a traveller from St. Petersburg arriving in some remote provincial town in nineteenth-century Russia.

In the late forties, after the war, Lazar decided to move to L.A. permanently, and he quickly established himself as the connection between New York and Hollywood. Not a reader himself (he is notorious for not bothering to read the books he is selling), he cultivated writers, publishers, and playwrights, and brought the studio heads projects they could never have found by themselves, for prices they would never have dreamed of paying to anyone else. In New York, Lazar became known as the man who could get you bagfuls of money from Hollywood; in Hollywood, he was known as the man who could bring you the hottest properties before anybody else on the Coast had heard of them. In the days when a transcontinental telephone call was a big deal, Lazar was in touch constantly, perfecting his peculiar blend of gossip, news, and sales pitch,



"Remember, in the other version they had a pea-green boat, and here they're using public transportation."

and a lot of people didn't know whether Lazar was speaking to them from his poolside in Beverly Hills or from around the corner on Fifth Avenue. (Interestingly, Lazar remains on the cutting edge of communications technology, despite his age. He was the first person I knew to own a portable cellular telephone, and to this day he always carries the latest, lightest, slimmest version; he also remains the only man I know who is able to make call forwarding to his car phone work.)

Early on, Lazar hit upon three rules that have stood him in good stead for over fifty years. The first was that he could always reach anyone, anywhere, any time. His secret weapon is the world's largest address book, full of the private, unlisted numbers of people whom nobody else can reach. Who else can pick up the phone and call Mrs. Norton Simon, Jack Nicholson, Barry Diller, Larry McMurtry, Arthur Schlesinger, Richard Nixon, Cher, Gregory Peck, or Henry Kissinger, and get through immediately? The second rule was always to go directly to the top. Lazar doesn't deal with underlings. The last rule was to insist on a quick answer. Even now, if I tell Irving that I want to think something over or discuss it with someone else he will snap, "Never mind, I can see you're not interested, I'll talk to Phyllis Grann."

Lazar once half jokingly promised to grant a publisher not "world rights" but "universe rights." A certain grandeur had become part of his manner, and Lazar rapidly became more famous than most of his clients. Even total strangers who knew little or nothing about book publishing and the movie business picked up the party trick of raising one trouser leg above the knee and putting a pair of horn-rimmed glasses against the kneecap to simulate Lazar's physiognomy. But it was his marriage to Mary Van Nuys, thirty years ago, that gave him, at last, the stability without which his remarkable career could never have unfolded—or sustained itself for so long.

Lazar's bachelor days were famous, and he is still a professional flirter—he manages to combine a kind of old-fashioned chivalry with a frank come-on that gives new meaning to the phrase "a wandering eye"—but marriage tamed him somewhat. Mary, who had an enig-



matic beauty that reminded one of Louise Brooks in her heyday, had been a model—she even appeared in advertisements as a "Coca-Cola girl"—and later became a television and motion-picture producer and an editor, but her real job was keeping Lazar on an even keel. It was not just a love affair. Mary—who died in January, after a long and painful illness—was Irving's best friend, his severest critic, and his strongest supporter.

Once, a few years ago, when my wife and I were lunching with Lazar at the Four Seasons, he turned up late because he had been shopping at Cartier for a present for Mary. He proudly showed us a magnificent emerald ring, which we both admired.

"Is it Mary's birthday?" Margaret asked.

Lazar shook his head. No, he said, he had bought it on impulse. "Mary's a good kid," he said, with affection. "She deserves it," he went on. "She has to put up with a lot."

"Like what?" Margaret asked.

"Like my playing around," Lazar said.

"And do you play around often?" Margaret asked. (At the time, Lazar was at least eighty.)

"Every chance I get, kiddo!" he shot back, with a wink. This may or may not have been true, but for all that there was never any doubt that his love for Mary was genuine and deep, and shared—the center of his life.

When Mary was around, Lazar minded—up to a point—his "p"s and "q"s, and she may have been the only person whose displeasure he feared. I remember going to their apartment in New York one evening when a few of Lazar's "regulars" were gathered for drinks before going out to dinner. I was surprised—and pleased—to find Mary there, since Irving had said she was in California, but apparently she had decided to join him in New York a couple of days earlier than they'd planned.

When we arrived, Lazar was on the telephone calling restaurants for a reservation. From his side of the conversation, it was clear that we weren't going to be eating in a hurry. "We'll be eight people," I heard him say to the *maitre d'* of one of his favorite Italian restaurants. "At nine o'clock. No, make that ten people, nine-thirty." He turned to me. "You like Chinese food?" he asked. Ever

the diplomat, I said Margaret did. "Great," Lazar said. "Let's do that instead." He called David K's and booked a table for twelve people, at ten o'clock. By then, I guessed, Lazar had booked tables all over town. He was on the phone inviting more people to dinner as I sat down next to Michael Caine. "Are we going to eat any time soon, do you think?" he asked, emptying a bowl of mixed nuts.

"I don't think so," I said.

"Neither do I," he agreed, with a sigh.

At that moment, the doorbell rang. Lazar opened it to find Mary McFadden—often his date in New York (a kind of reverse-role "walker") when Mary Lazar was absent—standing in the hallway in all her pleated finery, evidently under the impression that this was to be a formal evening, or possibly a masked ball. She pirouetted gracefully before Irving, who did not conceal his displeasure. From the living room, Mary Lazar stared at this apparition with an expression that suggested there were darker depths to her soul than I had imagined. "Oh dear," Michael Caine whispered. "Trouble in paradise."

Mary McFadden stopped twirling her pleats and looked at Lazar. "Aren't you going to ask me in?" she asked, rather plaintively.

"What the hell are *you* doing here?" Lazar said.

"What am I doing here? You *invited* me! I'm your *date*."

"Mary's here," Lazar said, and he firmly closed the door.

Mary did not suggest that he open it, though Mary McFadden was a friend of hers, too. There were limits, it seemed, to her tolerance. Indeed, anyone who was close to the Lazars soon learned that Mary, mild as she appeared, was not somebody to cross, and most of the time Lazar didn't cross her. The truth is that he trusted Mary's judgment to a remarkable degree, and listened to her as he listened to nobody else.

In some ways, they made an odd couple, not because of the difference in their ages (more than twenty years) but because of the difference in their temperaments. Irving is mercurial, impatient, volatile, occasionally abrasive, always eager for company, noise, action. Mary was an altogether quieter and gentler soul, with perfect manners and a cool, intelligent wit that sometimes took strangers by surprise. She was absolutely

devoted to Irving, but often showed the strain of keeping up with his roller-coaster existence. Still, Mary gave Lazar what he had always lacked—a support system, a base from which to stage his guerrilla raids on studios, publishers, and rivals. He was not a man who was ever comfortable in an office, and before marrying Mary he had led a somewhat gypsylike existence, shuttling from coast to coast, living in hotels, sharing digs with bachelor pals like Frank Sinatra. With Mary, improbably, he settled down quite happily, dug himself in for the long haul.

WELL before his marriage, Lazar, influenced in part by Moss Hart, had made the move from the picture business to the book world, and thus survived the collapse of the studios unharmed. Having been a maverick among the studio bosses, he was soon securely established as the Peck's bad boy of publishing, wheeling and dealing among people who never really felt that wheeling and dealing was something that ought to be done with books. He changed the rules so quickly that they simply ceased to exist. Since his social life and his professional life were one and the same, his client list expanded as his social celebrity grew. From being a West Coast celebrity, Lazar soon became a "bicoastal" celebrity—perhaps the first—and then, inevitably, an international celebrity. Lazar's unique blend of show-business glitz and fast-talking pitch turned out to work equally well for him in every culture—in his own way, he was as exportable as Coca-Cola and Hollywood movies. Foreigners who were usually tight with a krone or a franc didn't mind overpaying to buy a book from Lazar—were even rather proud of the fact, as if it put them, somehow, in the big time. George Weidenfeld, the British publishing tycoon, himself no slouch at selling dross for gold to the unwary, used to ask me, when I mentioned some project or other to him, "Swiftly isn't the agent, is he? I can't do business with him, dear boy. Isn't there some way I can buy this from you *directly*, at a *reasonable* price, between old friends?" Of course, there wasn't, if Lazar was the agent, and I would usually hear back from Lazar within a day. "George called," he'd say, "and I managed to get him up to two hundred and fifty thousand pounds for the U.K., kiddo, so

you can go to—oh, at least a million five."

Unbeknownst to anyone, Lazar had unintentionally created a kind of international literary Ponzi scheme, in which he would demand a huge sum from an American publisher but promise to "lay off" a large percentage of it with the proceeds from the foreign rights. He would then sell the British rights to the book to Weidenfeld, say, who would in turn "lay off" what he had promised to pay by selling the first-serial rights to one of the Sunday papers. Lazar had come up with a way of producing record-breaking sums for his authors at no apparent risk to anyone—until too many other people started to do it. Perhaps more important, as the world economy took a downturn, publishers all over the world found themselves being acquired by the kind of big companies in which there were people who made a profession of looking at the numbers and reading a balance sheet—something that had not until then been considered a necessary skill in book publishing. Lazar went on to make some of his biggest and juiciest deals in the brave new world of austerity and number-crunching—selling Cher's book for an enormous sum, for example, and coming close to making six-million-dollar deals for Madonna and Barbra Streisand.

The truth is that nothing—not even the world economy—can blunt Irving's appetite for making big deals, or his ability to bring them off. It's not need that drives him—he has more money than he could ever spend, and unhappily, since Mary's death, more money than he knows what to do with. It's probably only the stubborn determination to be on top that kept Lazar going during her illness.

Being on top is what makes Lazar tick. He thinks in terms of the "very small number of agents who have won an international reputation," as one admiring rival puts it—a group that Lazar defines as Myron Selznick, Charles Feldman, Leland Hayward, Lew Wasserman, Michael Ovitz, and, though he doesn't say it himself, Irving Lazar. His attempt to sell a Madonna book, for example, was a carefully planned feint against Michael Ovitz, at C.A.A.—perhaps a way of reminding Ovitz, and anybody else who needs reminding, that, whoever the hot, big agents are in Hollywood today, Lazar can still outflank

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Every major publisher had been pursuing Madonna for a book—any book—ever since she reached megastardom, but the problem was that nobody really *knew* Madonna. Madonna did not invite publishers to dinner. She did not reply to letters from publishers. She did not take telephone calls from publishers—not that there were any who knew how to call her.

Into this void stepped Lazar. He, at least, had met Madonna, or said he had. He knew what she wanted to do—a heavily illustrated book of erotic poetry, he said, waving aside requests for more details. One might suppose that erotic poetry, even by Madonna, would have turned most publishers off, but such is the publisher's belief in Hollywood stardom as a means of selling books that even this did not discourage bidders. And Lazar knew exactly how to attract the publishers: he let them know that not only could they not read Madonna's "poems" but they couldn't even expect to meet Madonna, who was too busy to waste her time auditioning for book publishers. Publishers naturally fell all over themselves bidding for the book, or books, until four million five hundred thousand or five million dollars had been reached, on the basis of nothing but Lazar's sales pitch and the promise that if a deal was made Madonna might then meet the successful suitor. The only problem, as it turned out, was that Lazar didn't represent Madonna. C.A.A. did, and Michael Ovitz was then in the middle of delicate negotiations for a deal with Warner that would include movies, records, and books—a kind of all-embracing superdeal, whose major obstacle was that Lazar was busy selling a part of it separately to anyone who would listen. Ovitz, it was reported, was not amused, though after he finally closed the deal between Madonna and Warner he apparently decided to make up with Lazar, and even sent him a present with a card that read, "You're my hero," probably because, like everybody else in Hollywood, he regards Lazar's ability to go on selling into his ninth decade as a kind of

totemic example of longevity—a promise that if you're lucky, or make the right deal with the gods, you, too, will never have to give up the wheeling and dealing, the limos, the luncheons at the Bistrot Garden, the dinners at Spago, or the invitation to Lazar's Oscar party.

A VIEW of himself as the underdog is part of Irving's strength—that and the fact that he is a kind of institution, having carefully fashioned his own image over the years as the man who can work miracles. His annual Oscar party is a case in point. It began as a relatively informal and modest event—a movable feast. I remember going to it years ago at Tavern on the Green, with a television set at every table, so we could watch the proceedings. By the nineteen-eighties, the Oscar party had moved permanently to Hollywood, and it soon became something at once more formal and more formidable—a kind of *hommage* to Lazar, as well as a potent demonstration of his power to attract both the old guard and the new. Nobody else in Hollywood was powerful enough to bridge these two worlds—or old enough, come to that. An invitation to the Oscar party became the most sought-after ticket in Hollywood, reaching the point where it was once rumored that the Academy had contemplated changing the time of the award ceremony, so as not to incur Lazar's wrath by creating a stream of late arrivals to his party. Gatecrashers multiplied, and Lazar himself gleefully took part in ejecting them.



Lazar planned and ran his party in the spirit of Napoleon commanding an army, with Mary as second-in-command. Who but Lazar could have seated the elite of the new Hollywood, like Cher, next to octogenarians? Who but Lazar could have pulled off the ultimate coup of getting Madonna to come to his party after her bump-and-grind act at the 1991 Academy Awards ceremony, still wearing the famous white dress and fur boa, and with Michael Jackson in tow as her date? Major movie stars stood on their chairs to get a better view of Lazar guiding Madonna and Michael Jackson to their places. It was, one guest says, "a kind of apotheosis—Irving's greatest triumph." Lazar's party has become part of Holly-

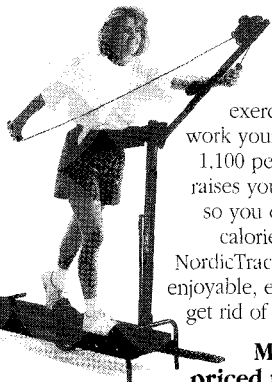
wood legend. The invitation list is strictly limited to Lazar's friends—a large and loosely defined group—and Lazar is draconian in keeping outsiders firmly outside. There is no appeal from his decisions, which are absolute and final. It is rumored that once the financier Sir James Goldsmith asked if he could bring a member of European royalty along and was told that he could not; that Sylvester Stallone, when he asked if he could bring his bodyguards, was told there would be no "dangerous agents" present, and that his bodyguards would be relegated to the bar; and that a few years ago Kathleen Tynan's uninvited date was unceremoniously booted out. People have actually tried to bribe their way onto the guest list, and major Hollywood figures have humbled themselves to beg for an invitation from Lazar (and have been turned down), while those who are invited worry about where they're going to be seated. (One relatively humble guest was startled one year to find herself placed next to Clint Eastwood, because the Lazars had decided to make the seating plan more democratic.) The Party—it is always spoken of as if there were no other—is at once "the last of the great old-style parties, like the ones Douglas Fairbanks used to give" (in the words of Freddie de Cordova, who used to produce the "Tonight Show"), and "an important Hollywood moment" (in the words of Dominick Dunne, a Party veteran). In a sense, Lazar has achieved ultimate Hollywood status: he has upstaged the Academy Awards.

When Mary Lazar died, it was widely predicted that Lazar would give up the Party—that he wouldn't want to do it, that he wouldn't have the strength. This was a misreading of Lazar, as anybody who knows him well would have guessed. He was, on the contrary, determined to go ahead—and, if possible, to make the Party bigger and better than ever.

All the same, in the weeks after Mary's funeral I worried about Lazar, as did all his friends. He seemed frail, lost, lonely. There was a curious gentleness to Lazar in his distress—unfamiliar and, I supposed, a bad sign. Then, out of the blue one day, when I called him to ask how he was feeling, I heard him say, "I feel like a tiger, kiddo, never better. Now let's do some business." ♦

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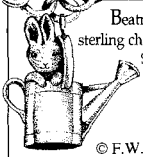
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IN THE GARDEN

JUST READING

While the ground is still frozen, a gardener's imagination turns to the planting of ideas.

BY JAMAICA KINCAID

ON the day, a few weeks ago, that the temperature was ten below zero, the Ronniger's Seed Potatoes catalogue arrived, and that was the cheeriest thing, for I spent the afternoon sitting in a bathtub of hot water, trying to satisfy a craving for overchilled ginger ale and oranges, and reading this little treasure. It is the most beautiful catalogue I receive each year; it is simple, like a hymn. (I was brought up a Methodist, and I am thinking of the first one that was in my children's hymnal, "All Things Bright and Beautiful.") It is plain, humble, and comforting—the opposite of the White Flower Farm catalogue, which is sumptuous, showy, and expensive-looking. Ronniger's is printed on newsprint, and it has photographs that might have been taken with a not very good camera, or by someone who was not a particularly good photographer, or a combination of the two. But the photographs are adorable. They are

concentration on his face, as if the world outside the cultivation of the potato were completely closed to him. But this is only conjecture on my part; it could very well be that this boy is deeply familiar not only with the cultivation of the potato but with its history, with the crucial part it played in his ancestors' diet; and, therefore, development as a people.

The process of receiving and reading catalogues may not be as important to my garden as my weeding is, but that is the way I begin the gardening year. The very big, showy ones, like the White Flower Farm and Wayside Gardens catalogues, are psychological lifts: I never read them; I only look again and again at the pictures. The best catalogues for reading are not unlike wonderful books; they plunge me deep into the world of the garden, the growing of the things advertised (because what are these descriptions of seeds and plants but adver-



of people doing one thing or another with potatoes, or of machinery used in the cultivation of potatoes, or of potatoes just by themselves, in a bowl or some other household container. It is a catalogue only of potatoes and a few things that might enhance the flavor of a potato (onions, garlic, salt) or might make a potato grow better (a cover crop of alfalfa or clover). There is a particularly appealing picture of a young boy gathering potatoes; he has a look of blissful con-

tisements?), and that feeling of being unable to tear myself away comes over me, and I look out the window at the garden, which is blankets upon blankets of white, and see it filled with the things described in the catalogue I am reading.

It is in such a state that I read the Ronniger's Seed Potatoes catalogue. Here is a description of an early-maturing potato called the Dazoc: "Talk about a delicious red potato... we

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found this one in our neighborhood on the Moyie River Road, grown since 1953 by Bud Behrman, who claims it came from North Dakota and has long since disappeared from commercial markets. Yet, he and his brother have zealously kept it going over the years. Round red deep eyes, excellent flavor, delicious baked and great hash browns, stores well. Bud and family eat them 'til the next crop produces new potatoes." This seemingly straightforward description of a kind of potato provided many hours of deliberation and fantasy on my part: How many kinds of early-maturing potatoes can I grow this year? Should Dazoc be among them? Surely a potato grown by someone named Bud Behrman and eaten regularly by him and his family must be a good potato. And the Behrmans—who are the Behrmans? I imagined the Behrman family as the nicest people ever. When I was young and living far away from my family, my life was almost completely empty of domestic routine, and so I made a fetish of the way ordinary people in families lived inside their homes. I read women's magazines obsessively and would often cook entire meals (involving meats in tins, and frozen vegetables) from the recipes I found in them. One year, I made an entire Thanksgiving dinner that was the same Thanksgiving dinner a family somewhere in the Midwest ate every year. This meal was featured in one of the magazines I read all the time, and the portrayal of these people and their food was so compelling to me that not only did I make the entire meal but, after a friend and I ate it, I called up the Midwestern family and told them what I had done; they were perplexed and flattered. I believe that that meal brought to an end that particular expression of alienation in my life. It was the memory of this that made me not order the Dazoc potato but remain content with simply imagining the Behrmans and their potato dinners.

Then I moved on to the plantsman Shepherd Ogden and the catalogue he puts out with his wife, *The Cook's Garden*. It is from him that I always get my lettuce and other salad greens, and a beet called Formanova, which he describes this way (the descriptions are written by him; he is a writer): "An old favorite of ours, and for good reason. Very tender

and sweet, with a unique carrot shape that makes it easy to peel and slice. Can be planted closer than other main crops for high yields." But this beet isn't shaped like a carrot at all. It is shaped like a penis, and I always refer to it that way; I call it the penis-shaped beet. This used to be my favorite catalogue to read before I discovered Ronniger's, and it remains high on the list of the catalogues I read over and over just for the descriptions. I know Shepherd Ogden well; he



had been the previous tenant of the first house I lived in here in Vermont, and each year when I read his catalogue it is quite like talking to him. When I first met Shep, he mystified me; he is a very tall man who moves much too swiftly for his height, and he speaks as swiftly as he moves. I finally understood him when, one day, he told me that until he was eighteen years old he was five feet tall, and then suddenly he grew twelve inches in twelve months, but throughout his teenage years he thought of himself as a short person, and he never got over that. Knowing him in that way, I read his catalogue and feel that he is speaking directly to me.

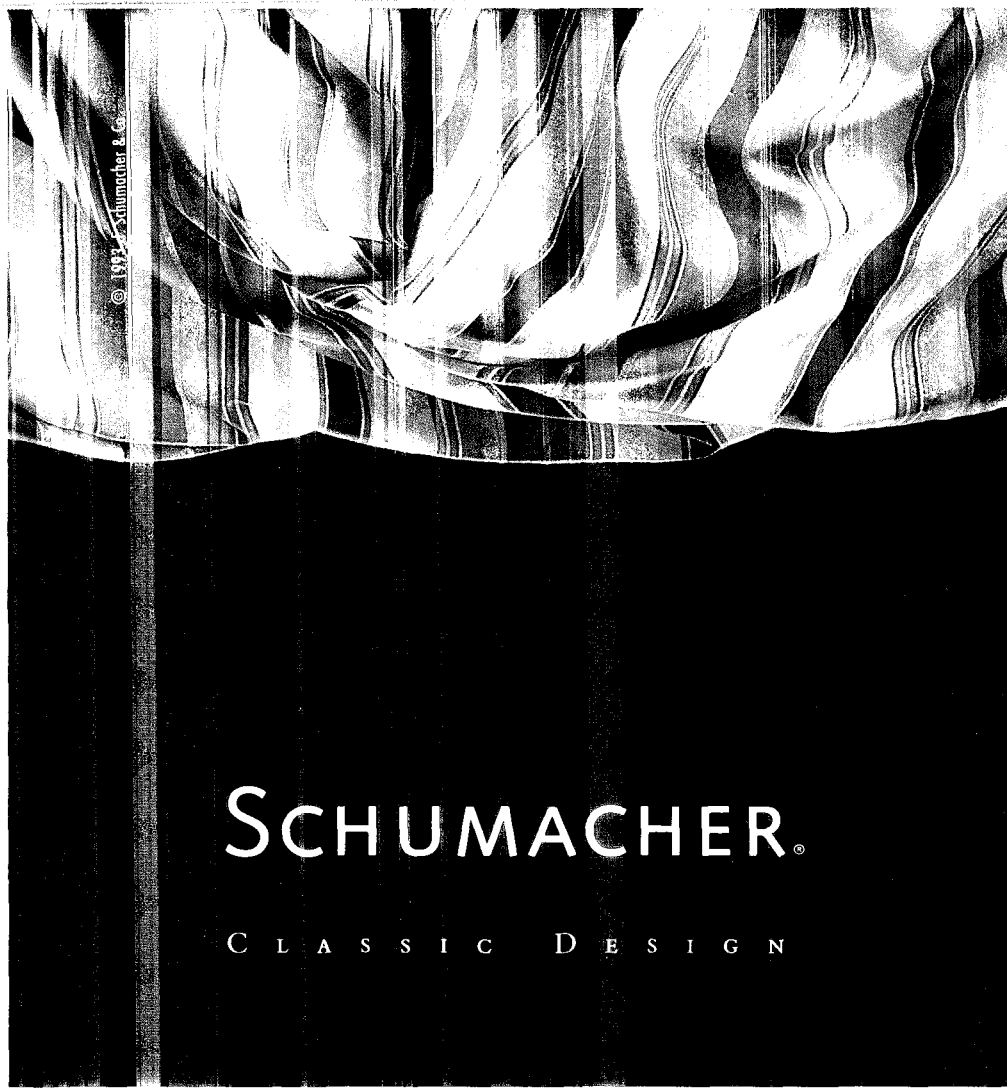
I am having a minor infatuation with the Shepherd's Garden Seeds catalogue (no relation to Shep Ogden's catalogue), so I ended up ordering more than I meant to from them. But the description of the Kidma cucumbers was hard to resist: "Developed for eating out of hand, they are perfect when picked at 5 to 8 inches long. These cucumbers are not marketed commercially because they are too delicate to stand shipping." This is the luxury of the kitchen garden—growing things that you cannot buy at the store. And from Shepherd's Garden Seeds I also got Chioggia Striped beets (described as an Italian variety), which I tried late last summer at a friend's house; they revealed pink-in-white circles when sliced, and they were delicious plain, without a vinaigrette or butter. And I ordered Blue Lake string beans, which I have never grown; they are the most common string beans to grow, and, conversely, for just that reason I wanted to have them this year. But it was in the seeds for flowers that I lost myself: three packets each of Old Spice and Early Mammoth sweet peas. Where I will put them all, I don't know yet, but they'll all

IN THE GARDEN

have to go in; there's no such thing as too many sweet peas. I also ordered packets of rose campion, cottage pinks, foxglove, stock, and double Canterbury bells.

I plan to plant all these flowers, along with some love-in-a-mist (from Smith & Hawken), daylilies, platycodon, malva, and many other flowers I find beautiful in themselves, completely disregarding the great Gertrude Jekyll's admonitions about color schemes, complementary or contrasting. Lately I have been immersed in her writing, and it was this extraordinary pleasure that the arrival of the spring catalogues interrupted. In her book "Colour Schemes for the Flower Garden" (which is hard to find in this country, and which I just happened to come across in Borders Bookshop, in Ann Arbor, Michigan) she says, "I am strongly of opinion that the possession of a quantity of plants, however good the plants may be themselves and however ample their number, does not make a garden; it only makes a *collection*." And, again, "Given the same space of ground and the same material, they may either be fashioned into a dream of beauty, a place of perfect rest and refreshment of mind and body—a series of soul-satisfying pictures—a treasure of well-set jewels; or they may be so misused that everything is jarring and displeasing. To learn how to perceive the difference and how to do right is to apprehend gardening as a fine art." All that and much more of what she says about beauty and art in the garden is perfectly true—but what if all the flowers I love and want very much to grow are, when seen together, all wrong, all jarring and displeasing? When I lived in my old house and had just started gardening and knew even less than I do now, I decided one day to place a large square bed in the middle of my small lawn. It seemed an odd thing to everybody—everybody told me so—but I just went ahead and put things I liked in this square: white peonies, pink peonies, some yellow lupines, some Johnny-jump-ups, and some portulaca, and then, on one edge, lavender and oregano. I found this quadrangle beautiful and used to sit for long stretches in a chair and gaze at it; at the time I was much in love with lupines.

Devotion to what I love, or might love, has caused me to order six rugosa Alba, a Reine des Violettes, and a Ma-



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dame Isaac Pereire—all roses—from Wayside Gardens. I wanted four Paul's Himalayan Musk from them, too—this is a great Rambler, pink, which I had planned to run up some old apple trees (an idea not unique to me; I got it from Gertrude Jekyll)—but they were sold out. The rugosa Alba I shall put in an opening near the road; I don't know how they will look, but they will be full of thorns, so the deer won't eat them. They might keep the deer out, that is. I could make a barrier against the deer from many things that grow naturally around here—honeysuckle is something many people use in this way, also spirea and hydrangea—and the idea of staying in harmony with your surroundings is another one of Gertrude Jekyll's laws, but I very much want a

hedge of coarse white roses, with red hips later on. The Reine des Violettes, too, might be strange—I believe I am opposed to blue roses—but once I saw a picture of it I began to imagine it in the corner, at the far end of my new stone wall, along with some Canterbury bells, blue and pink platycodon (White Flower Farm), and blue and white campanula. In a large order to White Flower Farm that I made—this went against my promise to myself not to order too much from them, because they are expensive and they seem so conceited in their advertisements, but their daylilies are the best I have ever grown—were six Canada lilies. They look best surrounded by masses of green grass and brown tree trunks; that is how I saw them when I first fell in love with them, in a field across from my first house in Vermont, the house that Shep Ogden used to occupy. They are tall, with stems two fingers thick and modest-sized, cadmium-color, cup-shaped flowers, their heads bent down as if in a demonstration of humility. And where to put these? There is a part of my garden that I could call the woodland garden, but I won't (I don't like giving nicknames to places in my garden); that is where the Canada lilies will go, along with some ferns that I am just beginning to love and some perennial foxgloves. I don't know how this will look. It may not only violate established rules of gardening

but also not please me in the end at all.

In the Park Seed catalogue I saw some beautiful portulaca. When I think of this little spready plant with short, spiny yet succulent leaves and roselike flowers, I think of it by itself, isolated, disregarding how it might fit into the garden as a whole. My love for this plant is no longer a mystery to me. Last summer, as I knelt over it, fretting about its

health (fretting is the most common of all the moods that a gardener can have; a gardener frets even when things are going well), the origins of my feeling for it became clear to me. When I was little and lived in Antigua, my mother used to leave me in the care of a woman who, once we were alone, would take me to visit a friend of hers, a man, whose name I cannot re-

member. They would talk for a while and then disappear inside—to have sex, I realized some time later—leaving me all by myself outside. He lived in a small yellow house, and the shutters, which they would close up when they were inside, were painted a vivid blue. In the front of the house was a little walkway, and on either side of the walk were two banks carpeted with this flower, portulaca, which we called bachelor's buttons, and which behaves like a perennial there. These portulaca were crimson and deep purple, and I used to dance up and down around them, pretending that I was a little girl from somewhere else. From that garden I could see the sea, and sometimes a locomotive, pulling cars loaded with sugarcane, would pass by, for the house was near the railroad tracks. The woman and I would return to her home, and she always had a bag full of brown sugar, the raw kind, only a stage away from being molasses; she would sometimes give me a lump of it to eat. She and my mother had an enormous fight when my mother found out about our trips to the man's house, but they would have had an enormous fight anyway; people there always do.

Gertrude Jekyll's nurse told her that dandelions were "Nasty Things," and wouldn't allow her to pick them and carry them home. I learned this in a biography of Miss Jekyll written by a woman named Sally Festing, which I

read intermittently—in between the spring catalogues and Gertrude Jekyll's own writing. I identify strongly with the pain writers experience when they are criticized, so I don't want to say too loudly how unsatisfying I found this book. It's possible that the nurse's disapproval of dandelions was an event that led to the person Gertrude Jekyll became and her choice of vocation, but the author doesn't say; this kind of speculation doesn't seem to interest her. This book is very decent and discreet—just the qualities I want in a friend, but not in a book I am reading. Was Gertrude Jekyll ever in love with anyone? Did she ever have sex? That's just the kind of thing I like to know about other people. Gertrude Jekyll had many close friendships with women; the book does say that. And it says that she knew John Ruskin; she was much influenced by his ideas about art. But I wanted to know what Gertrude thought of the fact that an English court had annulled Ruskin's marriage, which had never been consummated. Apparently he had been horrified to discover, on his wedding night, that his wife had pubic hair; she was not smooth and hairless like the nude statues he so admired. (All this I read somewhere else, though.) This biography skips happily along, and then surprises you with a new piece of information. I carried around in my head the fact that the architect Edwin Lutyens and his wife, Emily, were very much in love, and then all of a sudden I read that Emily had become involved in some way not at all clear to me with Krishnamurti, and that Edwin turned up to visit Gertrude in the company of Lady Victoria Sackville and her daughter Vita. I guessed that Edwin and Lady Victoria Sackville were having an affair. Sometimes he called Gertrude Bumps, and sometimes Woozle. She was an ugly woman, and very conscious of it. What better way to divert attention from herself than to make pronouncements about correctness and beauty in the garden? What a perfect example of making a virtue of your own neuroses!

As I finish writing this, the thermometer outside my door reads eighteen below zero. I now *know* that spring will never come. I shall spend the rest of my life reading seed and plant catalogues, and books about gardens and the people connected to them. ♦





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ON THE NUCLEAR EDGE

In the spring of 1990, Pakistan and India faced off in the most dangerous nuclear confrontation of the postwar era. And while the Bush Administration successfully averted disaster, it kept the crisis a secret, even from Congress, as it also kept secret the extent of Pakistan's covert nuclear purchases inside the United States.

BY SEYMOUR M. HERSH

ON May 30, 1990, President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union arrived in Washington for his second summit meeting with President George Bush. The Cold War was over, and the publicly announced agenda reflected that fact: the two world leaders would concentrate their talks on the future of unified Germany and on renewed negotiations to reduce long-range nuclear weapons. Most Americans were increasingly upbeat about the prospects for world peace. A *Times*/CBS public-opinion poll of more than eleven hundred Americans taken a week before the summit showed that fewer than one in five believed nuclear war to be likely by the year 2000—far fewer than those interviewed in earlier polls.

There was a fearful irony in the poll, because in the days before Gorbachev's visit the Bush Administration became convinced that the world was on the edge of a nuclear exchange between Pakistan and India, as both nations continued their tug-of-war over control of the state of Kashmir, on India's northern border, whose status has been in dispute since the collapse of the British Empire in India, in 1947. During months of increasing tension, India had massed two hundred thousand troops, including paramilitary forces, in Kashmir, and had deployed five brigades of its most sophisticated attack unit, the Indian Army Strike Corps, fifty miles from the Pakistani border in the south. Pakistan, against which the much larger India had fought—and won—three wars since 1947, openly deployed its main armored tank units along the Indian border and, in secret, placed its nuclear-weapons arsenal on alert. There would be no repeat of the disastrous two-week war of December, 1971, when Pakistan, outgunned and outgeneraled, was dismembered by an Indian blitzkrieg and lost what is now Bangladesh.

The American intelligence community, also operating in secret, had concluded by late May that Pakistan had put together at least six and perhaps as many as ten nuclear weapons, and a number of senior analysts were convinced that some of those warheads had been deployed on Pakistan's American-made F-16 fighter planes. The analysts also suspected that Benazir Bhutto, the populist Prime Minister of Pakistan, had been cut out of—or had chosen to remove herself from—the nuclear planning. Her absence meant that the nation's avowedly pro-nuclear President, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and the Pakistani military, headed by Army General Mirza Aslam Beg, had their hands, unfettered, on the button. There was little doubt that India, with its far more extensive nuclear arsenal, stood ready to retaliate in kind.

Since the last week of May was summit week, President Bush and his top aides were preoccupied with Gorbachev and crucial questions about his status inside the Soviet Union. A full understanding of what could happen in South Asia during those days was thus most vivid to the men and women running American intelligence, who knew that Pakistan had long been America's ally in the clandestine war against the Soviet Union. As early as 1950, the Pakistani government had effectively ceded remote areas of its northern provinces to the Central Intelligence Agency and to the National Security Agency—the larger and still more secretive group that, from its headquarters, at Fort Meade, in Maryland, is responsible for communications intelligence. It was from northern Pakistan that the N.S.A. eavesdropped on the Soviet nuclear facilities in Kazakhstan; it was Pakistan that provided secret bases for America's U-2 spy flights; and it was Pakistan that served as a key jumping-off point for intelligence

gathering and anti-Soviet activities by the C.I.A.

Pakistan was rewarded for its support with large amounts of American military and economic aid. The American intelligence community, to protect its investment and its continuing operations, spent many millions of dollars to recruit agents and to install technical equipment to learn as much as possible about the inner workings of its ally. Those agents and that equipment enabled America to ascertain, in the early spring of 1990, that Pakistan had gone nuclear, and that its leadership was fully prepared to use the weapons, if necessary, in a war against India.

TWO of the men most deeply involved in the May, 1990, crisis recently agreed, for the first time, to discuss in on-the-record interviews what had happened. Richard J. Kerr, an even-tempered, low-key career intelligence officer, who, as deputy director of the C.I.A., coordinated the intelligence reporting in May of 1990, described the confrontation in stark terms: "It was the most dangerous nuclear situation we have ever faced since I've been in the U.S. government. It may be as close as we've come to a nuclear exchange. It was far more frightening than the Cuban missile crisis." Kerr retired as deputy director last year, after thirty-two years in the C.I.A.

At the height of the American concern, President Bush called on Robert M. Gates, a former longtime C.I.A. official who was then serving in the White House as the deputy national-security adviser, to fly on his behalf to Islamabad and New Delhi and negotiate a stand-down between the two perennial enemies. Gates's career at the C.I.A. had been mired by his closeness to William J. Casey, Ronald Reagan's controversial C.I.A. director, who led the nation into

the Iran-Contra morass. After Casey's death, in early 1987, Reagan failed in an attempt to install Gates at the top of the C.I.A., and the young Casey protégé—he was forty-three years old at the time—was eventually moved into the White House job. His performance as deputy national-security adviser finally won him respect throughout the bureaucracy. Gates told me that he, too, knew that a holocaust was at risk in May. "The analogy we kept making was to the summer of 1914," he said, referring to the inadvertent outbreak of the First World War. "Pakistan and India seemed to be caught in a cycle that they couldn't break out of. I was convinced that if a war started, it would be nuclear."

An enduring mystery is why the essential details of the India-Pakistan confrontation have remained a secret for almost three years, especially since it was the intervention of President Bush's personal White House envoy that defused what looked to be inevitable warfare. Stopping a nuclear exchange seemed made to order for the public-relations machinery of the White House. A few newspaper and television reports since 1990—

most notably in the *Sunday Times* of London and the *Los Angeles Times* and on NBC's "Nightly News"—have given some details of the India-Pakistan nuclear crisis, but the reports, whose sources were not named, were debunked by the Bush Administration as exaggerations. Similarly, many officials assured me, in the course of my reporting for this article, that, as a retired Under-Secretary of State put it, "there was a lot of oversell going on."

An obvious explanation for the high-level quiet revolves around the fact, haunting to some in the intelligence community, that the Reagan Administration had dramatically aided Pakistan in its pursuit of the bomb. President

Reagan and his national-security aides saw the generals who ran Pakistan as loyal allies in the American proxy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan: driving the Russians out of Afghanistan was considered far more important than nagging Pakistan about its building of bombs. The Reagan Administration did more than forgo nagging, however; it looked the other way throughout the mid-nineteen-eighties as Pakistan assembled its nuclear arsenal with the aid of many millions of dollars' worth of restricted, high-tech materials bought inside the United States. Such purchases

kistan. This legislation calls on the President to certify every year that Pakistan does not have nuclear weapons. Without such certification, Pakistan could not get any foreign aid. The certification process became farcical in the last years of the Reagan Administration, whose yearly certification—despite explicit American intelligence about Pakistan's nuclear-weapons program—was seen as little more than a payoff to the Pakistani leadership for its support in Afghanistan.

Thus, many of the men and women in the American intelligence community who in May of 1990 found themselves

monitoring what appeared to be the prelude to a nuclear exchange knew that the political leadership of the United States, flagrantly violating the law, had permitted Pakistan to buy restricted items inside the United States for its nuclear arsenal. Some of these officials, who are still working in the government, emphasized in interviews that many more nuclear-related goods were clandestinely bought inside the United States by Pakistan than by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. This information was simply not known outside the Bush Administration early last



While India was suppressing a rebellion in Kashmir, it moved troops into Rajasthan, causing Pakistani leaders to fear that India would invade their nation. United States surveillance indicated that Pakistan would launch a nuclear first strike against India rather than repeat its humiliating defeat of 1971.

have always been illegal, but Congress made breaking the law more costly in 1985, when it passed the Solarz Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act (the amendment was proposed by former Representative Stephen J. Solarz, Democrat of New York), providing for the cutoff of all military and economic aid to purportedly non-nuclear nations that illegally export or attempt to export nuclear-related materials from the United States.

A second law passed that year, known as the Pressler Amendment (for Senator Larry Pressler, Republican of South Dakota), also affected the continuous flow of hundreds of millions of dollars annually in American aid to Pa-

year, when the American media and Congress became obsessed with Iraqi high-tech purchases.

There is indisputable evidence that Pakistan has been able to escape public scrutiny for its violations of the law because senior officials of the Reagan and the Bush Administrations chose not to share the intelligence about nuclear purchases with Congress. The two Republican Administrations obviously feared that the legislators, who had voted for the Solarz and Pressler Amendments, would cut off funds for the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. It was yet another clash between a much desired foreign-policy goal and the law—a clash of the kind that emerged most

publicly in the Iran-Contra scandals of the mid-nineteen-eighties, when the Reagan Administration diverted funds from illicit arms sales to the Iranians to get around a congressional ban on arming the Nicaraguan Contras.

The government's ability to keep the Pakistani nuclear-arms purchases in America secret is the more remarkable because for the past four years the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Department have been struggling with an internal account of illegal Pakistani procurement activities, given by a former C.I.A. intelligence officer named Richard M. Barlow. Barlow, now thirty-eight years old, was hired by the C.I.A. in 1985 and quickly became one of the agency's top experts on Pakistan's nuclear program. In 1987, he was dismayed to learn, at first hand, that State Department and agency officials were engaged in what he concluded was a pattern of lying to and misleading Congress about Pakistan's nuclear-purchasing activities. He resigned a year later, after senior agency officials attempted to bar him from working on Pakistan. In 1989, Barlow, then working as a proliferation analyst in the office of the Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy, was forced to resign, under threat of firing, in what he alleges was retaliation for his persistent investigations into nuclear smuggling and his heated objections to yet another misleading congressional briefing on Pakistan. His allegations, initially written off as the mutterings of a malcontent, lately have been taken with increased seriousness by government investigators. In a recent interview, Sherman Funk, the Inspector General of the State Department, described Barlow as "one of the most brilliant analysts I've ever seen," and depicted his forced resignation as an injustice.

Barlow, who is currently a consultant for the intelligence community, agreed early this year to discuss his allegations in an interview, after initially attempting, he said, to work within the system. His allegations of a State Department and C.I.A. conspiracy to shield Pakistani nuclear-related purchases from members

of Congress have severely tested the government's system of oversight by Inspectors General. As of today, there have been no fewer than five I.G. reports dealing with Barlow, two of them in the Defense Department, with only Sherman Funk confirming some of his essential allegations. But Funk has recently urged his Defense Department colleagues to reopen their inquiries.

Barlow's complaints of government wrongdoing got a boost when Paul C. Warnke, who served as an Assistant Secretary of Defense under President Lyndon Johnson and as director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the Carter Administration, reviewed the case and agreed to represent Barlow on a pro-bono basis. "He was doing his job as best he could, and was penalized for doing his job," said Warnke, who is now a partner in the law firm of Howrey & Simon. "I don't think that's the way the government should operate. It's as simple as that." Warnke and a law-firm partner, James C. Duff, have assembled evidence indicating that the Defense Department's I.G. report included mischaracterized—and perhaps fabricated—testimony. Their information has been turned over to the Senate Armed Services Committee, and on March 17th Senator Jeff Bingaman, Democrat of New Mexico, a committee member, formally asked the Pentagon to reopen its investigation.

In interviews for this article over a three-month period, many of Barlow's former C.I.A. and State Department colleagues confirmed his essential allegation—that the full story of the Pakistani purchases was deliberately withheld from Congress, for fear of provoking a cutoff in military and economic aid that would adversely affect the prosecution of the war in Afghanistan. In addition, senior members of Congress, including Senator John Glenn, Democrat of Ohio, who is the chairman of the Governmental Affairs Committee, and former Representative Solarz, who was the chairman of the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, acknowledged that they had not been formally briefed, as

required by law, about any significant Pakistani procurement except for one publicly known case, which in 1987 forced President Reagan to invoke—and then waive—foreign-aid sanctions against Pakistan.

Furthermore, Senator Glenn, the former astronaut, who is widely respected inside the government for his discretion—he is a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence—said that he had been told nothing about the nuclear scare in 1990. "They should have told me," he said, citing legislation that compels the executive branch of government to keep him and other ranking members of Congress "fully and currently informed" on all proliferation-related activities.

It isn't difficult to understand why Glenn had not been briefed, even in camera: he has been one of the most persistent public critics of Pakistan's nuclear ambitions and of the failure of the Reagan and Bush Administrations to do something about them. Glenn told me he knew that many of his colleagues in the Senate and the House had viewed nonproliferation as a secondary issue, especially when they saw a chance to take on and defeat the Soviets on the battlefield, as in Afghanistan. "I always thought in terms of the bigger picture—the nonproliferation treaty," Senator Glenn said, referring to the 1968 international agreement, signed and ratified by the United States, to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. "We made a commitment that we'd cut off aid to transgressors, and we had to keep faith with those Third World people who signed with us. I didn't think I had any option but to press for enforcement of the law against Pakistan." He was in the minority on that issue all through the Reagan and Bush years, he said. "The Administration would always come to me and say how important it is to keep the arms flowing through to Afghanistan. I'd take my case on nonproliferation to the floor and lose the vote."

RICHARD KERR and Robert Gates still decline to discuss specific intelligence about the nuclear crisis in May of 1990, but a detailed account of what the American intelligence community knew—and did not know—about it has emerged in scores of interviews with Americans who were closely involved in the crisis management, and also

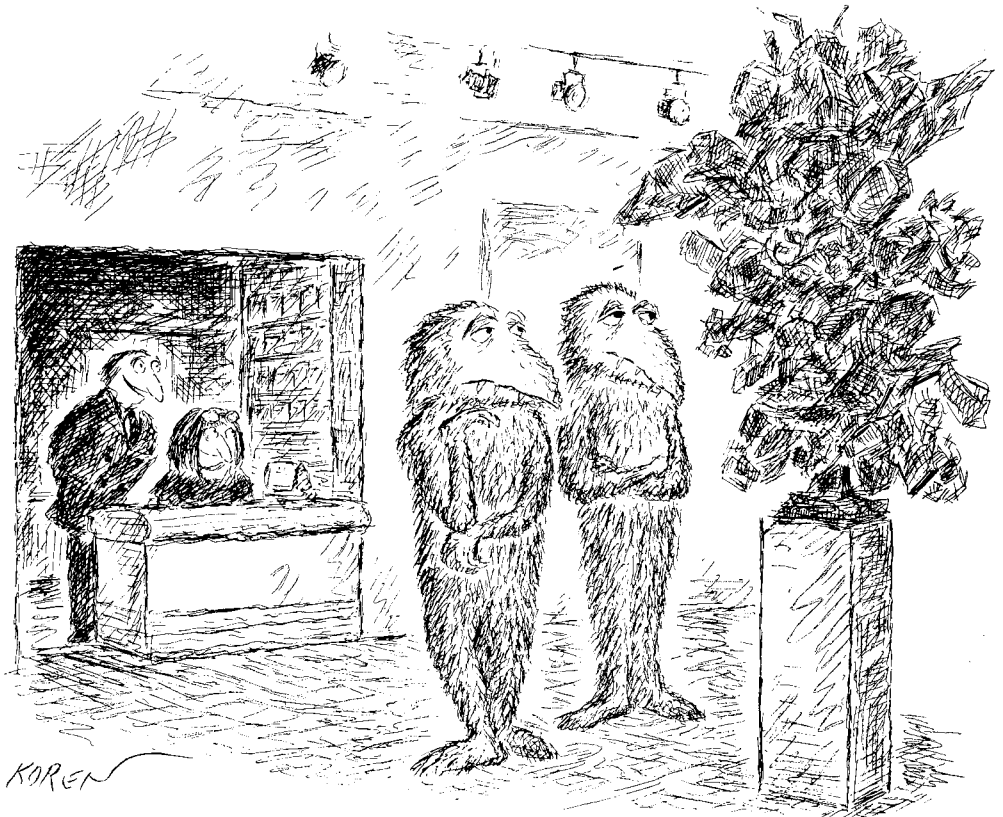


with some Pakistani and Indian military and government officials who had direct knowledge. Most of those men and women who agreed to be interviewed did so after being promised anonymity.

One surprising consensus was that the 1990 confrontation had its beginnings in a large-scale Indian military exercise, code-named Brass Tacks, that started near the end of 1986. Rajiv Gandhi was Prime Minister of India, and there was a new and aggressive Indian Army leader, General Krishnaswami Sundarji. Gandhi and Sundarji agreed to stage the largest military exercise in modern Indian history, involving all branches of the armed forces and as many as four hundred thousand troops, starting in December. The exercise would take place not in India's far north, where the always tense state of Kashmir is situated, but in the desert area of Rajasthan, a few hundred miles to the south, and roughly a hundred miles from the Pakistani border, which—as the Pakistan government was sure to note—was an ideal location from which to launch a cross-border operation into the Pakistani state of Sind that could cut Pakistan in half.

Another feature of the exercise was a decision by General Sundarji to integrate India's special weapons, including tactical nuclear bombs, into the day-to-day field maneuvers of the troops. American analysts concluded that the Indian operations, which at their height involved more than a thousand armored vehicles, were as large as some exercises carried out in Western Europe by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. President Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, who was also the Army chief of staff, viewed the Indian maneuvers as a direct threat, and ordered his armored units to move to the front, where, by mid-January, the two armies stood within firing range along an extended border area. At the height of the buildup, the Indian leadership decided to provide full-scale briefings to the Indian media about the Brass Tacks exercise, in which General Sundarji declared that they were non-provocative—there had been no public discussion of the huge troop movements until then—and the crisis abated.

The American intelligence community understood that the Indian operation was potentially more dangerous



"They have extraordinary taste."

than anyone in the public or the media realized. For one thing, there was evidence that General Sundarji, with the encouragement of some of the more hawkish elements in the Indian government, had toyed briefly with the possibility of simply moving his armies, which had gone into the field with extra fuel and ammunition, across the border and dismembering Pakistan. There was little question that the smaller and less mobile Pakistani Army would be unable to stop the Indian advance, and thus the landlocked Pakistan of the north, including the capital of Islamabad, could be cut off from the nation's main port, at Karachi, on the Arabian Sea. "This is the Pakistani nightmare," an Indian military analyst told me. At this point, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, a German-educated metallurgist, who has directed Pakistan's nuclear-weapons laboratories at Kahuta since the nineteen-seventies—he is known to some as the father of the Pakistani atomic bomb—gave a stunning interview to an Indian reporter, in which he explicitly claimed that Pakistan had the bomb. "What the C.I.A. has been saying about our possessing the bomb is correct," he was quoted as saying. "They told us Pakistan could never

produce the bomb and they doubted my capabilities, but they now know we have it." His government did not want to use the bomb, Khan added, but "if driven to the wall there will be no option left." His remarks created instant embarrassment and controversy in Washington—the Reagan Administration had reported only a few months earlier that there was no evidence of a Pakistani nuclear bomb—and Dr. Khan recanted his remarks within days, claiming that the reporter had tricked him into giving the interview.

Dr. Khan's goal was not to embarrass the United States but to convey a not very subtle message to the Indians: any attempt to dismember Pakistan would be countered with the bomb. Two days after the Khan interview was published, Prime Minister Gandhi publicly criticized the United States for failing to stop Pakistan's nuclear-weapons program, and for continuing to supply Pakistan with economic and military aid. As tensions diminished in the spring of 1987, there was one very troubling legacy for the American intelligence community: studies showed that the main intelligence services for both sides—India's Research and Analysis

Wing and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate—had exaggerated their reports to their senior leadership. It was clear that, in a crisis, both RAW and ISI were eager to provide incendiary intelligence without being sure of its reliability. Such eagerness could become deadly.

BY 1987, the American intelligence community had become exceedingly proficient at learning what could be learned about another nation's nuclear ambitions. From the early days of the Cold War and the first U-2 aerial-reconnaissance flights, special teams of analysts had learned to look for clues to nuclear proliferation. One tell-tale sign was the pouring of a thick concrete floor on an isolated construction site, which the Israelis had done in mid-1958 at Dimona, the site of their future nuclear reactor in the Negev Desert. C.I.A. and N.S.A. analysts immediately understood that Israel, public denials to the contrary, was going after a nuclear-weapons arsenal.

Sometimes the American analysts ignored the vast array of technical intelligence and relied on simple common sense. The C.I.A. had learned the advisability of continually monitoring the intellectual debate inside any nation suspected of being on the verge of going nuclear. Analysts correctly concluded that India had gone nuclear in the mid-nineteen-seventies, when its officer corps suddenly stopped publishing articles and essays on what had been a long-standing and occasionally vituperative argument about the strategic and tactical implications of such a move.

In Pakistan, the United States had done more than monitor an intellectual debate or spy on a suspected nuclear facility. For nearly two decades, the N.S.A. had maintained an extensive "watch list" of high-tech companies in Germany and Switzerland whose telexes and facsimile transmissions were routinely intercepted and translated for signs of nuclear trafficking with Pakistan, which was known to be an illicit purchaser of nuclear materials from the West. The constant spying paid off. C.I.A. operatives managed to come up with a complete set of the floor plans for an ambitious Pakistani uranium-enrichment plant at Kahuta, twelve miles west of Islamabad, while the plant was under construction. The plans showed that the

hot, or radioactive, work areas at Kahuta had been built as many as five stories underground, to guard against a surprise Indian bombing raid. Furthermore, once Kahuta was operational the C.I.A. found a way to obtain firsthand information, in detail, about nuclear-weapons work there.

Pakistan, apparently in response to India's Brass Tacks exercise, aggressively expanded its efforts in 1987. American satellites watched that year as a thick concrete floor was poured for what would become a second uranium-enrichment site—at Golra, also near Islamabad. It became known to West German intelligence that Pakistan had violated German law by buying a small plant for purifying and storing tritium gas. Tritium is a by-product of the irradiation of lithium-6 in a reactor; when tritium is inserted in a warhead, it provides additional neutrons at the moment of fission—in essence, jump-starting the weapon when it reaches critical mass. The result is a larger explosive yield with smaller amounts of enriched material—more bang for the buck.

There was widespread agreement inside the American intelligence commu-

A MAN-FLY

Crowds, streetcars stopped—is it a demonstration?
In the city of Oakland, in the year 1919?
All of them, obviously, in hats, looking up.
No, not at a speaker. It is a man-fly
Who climbs vertically the wall of a building.

O miserable man-fly, arms spread aloft,
You move inch by inch, testing a handhold.
And below, those hats. Will he fall? Or make it?

They stand in the photograph, lovers of plebeian games,
Of matches in a ring, acrobatics under the tent of a wandering circus,
Of catch-as-catch-can, of blood in the arena.
I am not a lover of mankind, though I pretended,
As if my tender skin, my fastidiousness were not against.

—But these here, hot-blooded, how many eyes,
Muscles, varieties of chin, shapes of lips,
All must be dead.
They are shadows, no more.

—And it is just that such a short existence had been their store.

—CZESLAW MILOSZ

(Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.)

nity in 1987 that Pakistan had enough enriched uranium to put together perhaps six nuclear devices. But was it in a form that could actually be used in a warhead? In more precise terms, the unresolved question was this: Had Dr. Khan's men converted enriched-uranium hexafluoride gas (UF₆) into a metal? The question resulted in the design of a highly sensitive C.I.A. operation, which produced irrefutable evidence that Pakistan was capable of manufacturing weapons-grade enriched-uranium metal at a facility near Islamabad—but not at Kahuta. The metal could then be machine-tooled to fit into a warhead small enough to hang under an F-16 wing.

Despite such evidence, the Reagan and Bush Administrations certified Pakistan in 1987, 1988, and 1989 as not having a nuclear weapon, the rationale being that there was no specific evidence that Pakistan had indeed done what it was known to be capable of doing. "There is no question that we had an intelligence basis for not certifying from 1987 on," Richard Kerr told me. The public American rationale for certification was that the continued flow of

American weapons and ammunition to Pakistan would reassure its leadership that it could rely on conventional arms, and thus have no need to go nuclear. It was a very thin argument, as everyone involved knew. The C.I.A.'s role in all this, Kerr said, was merely to supply the political leaders with the best available information and for them to carry on from that point.

ON August 17, 1988, President Zia, ten Pakistani generals, and Arnold L. Raphel, the United States Ambassador to Pakistan, were killed in the crash of Zia's Air Force C-130 a few miles north of the garrison town of Bahawalpur. General Beg, Zia's successor as the Army chief of staff, was known to be at least as deeply committed to Pakistan's nuclear project as Zia, but was also viewed as being much less dependent on the United States. So was Pakistan's new acting President, the seventy-three-year-old Ghulam Ishaq Khan, who had been Pakistan's Finance Minister and was then head of the Senate. Zia and President Khan had been among the most enthusiastic political and financial supporters of Abdul Qadeer Khan's expensive operations at Kahuta over the previous decade. Beg and President Khan emerged from the trauma of the Zia crash with firm control over the Pakistani nuclear project, and they maintained their control even after the general elections in November of 1988—the first democratic elections in Pakistan in eleven years—which led to the formation of a populist government headed by Benazir Bhutto. Ms. Bhutto's father, former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged in 1979, after being convicted of murder (in a much disputed trial), is widely credited with being the founder of the Pakistani nuclear project, but the American intelligence community simply does not know whether Benazir Bhutto was ever permitted full access to her nation's nuclear secrets.

A galvanizing moment for the new Pakistani leadership came in June of 1989, four

months after the Soviet Union began its withdrawal from Afghanistan, thereby handing the United States and its Pakistani allies a major Cold War victory. With the Soviets gone, President Bush and James Baker, the Secretary of State, decided that the United States could no longer ignore the evidence of the Pakistani bomb. The question of what Ms. Bhutto knew, or didn't know, about the bomb would be resolved when she paid a scheduled state visit to Washington in June; at that time she was provided with a detailed briefing by William H. Webster, the C.I.A. director. To dramatize the extent of American knowledge, Webster arranged for Ms. Bhutto to be shown a mockup of a Pakistani nuclear bomb. A day later, at a private meeting with President Bush, Ms. Bhutto was told that the United States would certify Pakistan as not having a nuclear weapon in 1989, but that no certification would be available in 1990—not unless she could assure the White House that her government would not take the final step of producing nuclear-bomb cores. To soften the blow, the President told her that he would authorize the sale of sixty more F-16s—planes desperately needed by Pakistan, whose Air Force was outmatched by India's. She

would have something to take back to the generals.

Ms. Bhutto, who was bitterly attacked in Pakistan last winter for her criticism of her country's nuclear program, did not wish to be interviewed for this article. But Mark A. Siegel, a former Carter Administration official and close Bhutto associate, who served as Pakistan's American lobbyist in 1989 and 1990, described her feelings of disbelief upon being briefed by Webster. "The briefing was more detailed" than any information that she, as Prime Minister, had been provided, Siegel said. "It also showed that the military was doing it behind her back." Nonetheless, the ardently pro-American Ms. Bhutto went before a joint session of Congress and, to thunderous cheers, categorically promised that "we do not possess nor do we intend to make a nuclear device," adding, "That is our policy."

The tough, albeit late, new American policy toward a nuclear-armed Pakistan, as it was relayed by President Bush to Ms. Bhutto, did not play well in Islamabad. "The Paks understood us better than we understood ourselves," one informed American official explained. "They knew that once the Soviets were whipped in Afghanistan we wouldn't need them



"Some people say you can't put a price on a wife's twenty-seven years of loyalty and devotion. They're wrong."

anymore. Would we unilaterally defend Pakistan? Never. Our relationship with Pakistan was to counter the Soviet-Indian relationship. The Pakistanis knew that time was limited. And that's why they went balls out on the nuclear program. Benazir never had a chance. If they held back the bomb from us, they could have held it back from her as well. It was too serious."

The official added that General Beg and his colleagues understood, as did the American intelligence community, that Pakistan could never stand up to a full-scale Indian assault. "The only way for the Pakistanis to deal with the Indians is to be able to take out New Delhi," he said. "There's no way that sending ten F-16s with conventional bombs is going to do it. Only the nukes could strike back."

Not surprisingly, General Beg's relationship with Robert B. Oakley, the new American Ambassador, had none of the warm rapport that had existed between President Zia and Ambassador Raphel. Beg and Oakley, one American recalled, were constantly at odds by 1990, and would "literally yell at each other." The C.I.A. eventually concluded, in a highly classified personality profile, that General Beg was more closely attuned to the Islamic world than to the West. He was viewed, one American said, as "a fifty-year-old Muslim aristocrat who suddenly became very religious . . . and thought Iran was a savior." In an interview, Oakley recalled that Beg's tilt toward Iran had destroyed their relationship. "Beg came back in February of 1990 from Teheran and told me, 'I'm greatly reassured,'" Oakley said. "He was pleased as punch. He said, 'Now we're in good shape. With the support from Iran promised me, we will win in case of war over Kashmir.'" The Pakistani General said as much in a meeting a few weeks later with General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, head of the United States Central Command, which has military responsibility for the Middle East and parts of South Asia. Beg's "pro-Iranian kick was scary to us," Oakley said. Oakley was interviewed a few days after his return from Somalia, where he served until early this March as the United States special envoy.

Another American who has been involved in nuclear intelligence for many years told me that his reservations about Pakistan and "an Islamic bomb" tran-

scended General Beg: "What if they decide they truly want to be a player on the world stage? Look at the Pakistani ego. They want to be with the Big Boys—China, the United States, the Soviet Union. Pakistan is deadly serious."

Dr. Khan's few public statements have been unsettling to many American policymakers. "Western countries had never imagined that a poor and backward country like Pakistan would end their [nuclear] monopoly in such a short time," Khan told a Pakistani newspaper in 1984. "As soon as they realized that Pakistan had dashed their dreams to the ground, they pounced at Pakistan and me like hungry jackals and began attacking us with all kinds of accusations and falsehood. . . . How could they tolerate a Muslim country becoming their equal in this field. . . . All Western countries including Israel are not only the enemies of Pakistan but in fact of Islam. . . . All these activities are part of the crusade which Christians and Jews have been carrying on against Muslims for about one thousand years."

India's military leadership has been worried for years about the combination of a new crisis in Kashmir and the Pakistani bomb. In a study published in 1979, D. K. Palit, a retired Indian major general, noted that the liberation of largely Muslim Kashmir could be "regarded as a *jihad*, a holy war of Islam, which would justify the threat of the use of the Islamic bomb against India." What was unnerving was "not that having acquired a minimum capability Pakistan would automatically launch an invasion across our border, using nuclear weapons to bomb Indian targets," Palit wrote. "Even an unstable military government would seek a more sophisticated scenario than that." Much more frightening was the possibility that Pakistan "could declare that it intended to use its nuclear weapons in a defensive capacity only, that is, as a deterrent to an Indian attack on Pakistani territory." In that case, Palit wrote, India's conventional deterrent against a preemptive Pakistani attack on Kashmir—its threat of a counteroffensive with the vastly supe-

rior Army, Navy, and Air Force—"would not be credible."

MAJOR GENERAL PALIT'S concerns and assumptions came into play in 1990, as Pakistan and India engaged in their near-war over Kashmir. That western Himalayas area, filled with caverns, mountains, lush valleys, gorges, rivers, rapids—and twice as many Muslims as Hindus—was the only state in the South Asian subcontinent not allowed to vote on self-determination in 1947, after Britain's withdrawal from its Indian empire triggered widespread religious rioting between Muslims and Hindus. Kashmir, which is about the size of Utah, was to remain under Indian control, but continued religious warring and demands for independence led the United Nations to arrange a ceasefire in 1948, providing for two-thirds of Kashmir to be a self-governing entity within the Indian Union, and for Pakistan to be nominally in control of the remaining third. The United Nations mandate also called for a plebiscite to allow the people of Kashmir to decide their own fate, but India has not permitted the election to take place, insisting that Pakistan must first withdraw its troops from Kashmir. Pakistan refused to do so unless India also withdrew its troops. India has taken advantage of the decades-old impasse to steadily increase its military and political control over its area of Kashmir, bringing itself into direct conflict with those Kashmiris who insist on independence.

Kashmir is still categorized by the United Nations as an occupied territory whose final fate is yet to be determined—a status similar to that of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the Middle East. As the birthplace of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Kashmir remains an emotional battleground for India, which is determined to hold on to the area by force. India views the loss of the predominantly Muslim area as a potential threat to the country's status as a secular nation. Pakistan has responded to the tenacious Indian hold on Kashmir by engaging in a large-scale covert effort to foment revolution, in part through the systematic use of insurgents. Neither India nor Pakistan is willing to see an independent Kashmir; the two nations have repeatedly gone to war to keep control of the territory. In the view of American intelligence, the weak governments in place in Pakistan and

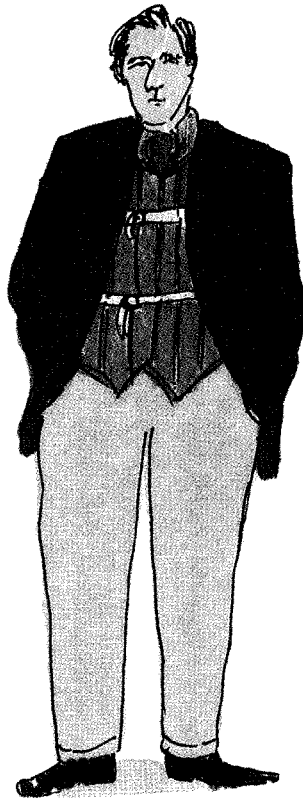


HIP FOR SPRING

SIX GREAT LOOKS FOR MEN



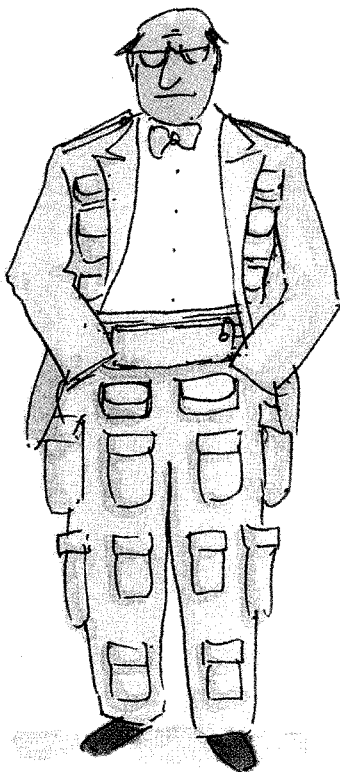
ORIGINAL CLEAR JEANS
FROM J. CREW



ORANGE VELVET FLOTATION
VEST FROM FENDI



INSULATED BELL-BOTTOM
WADERS FROM L.L. BEAN



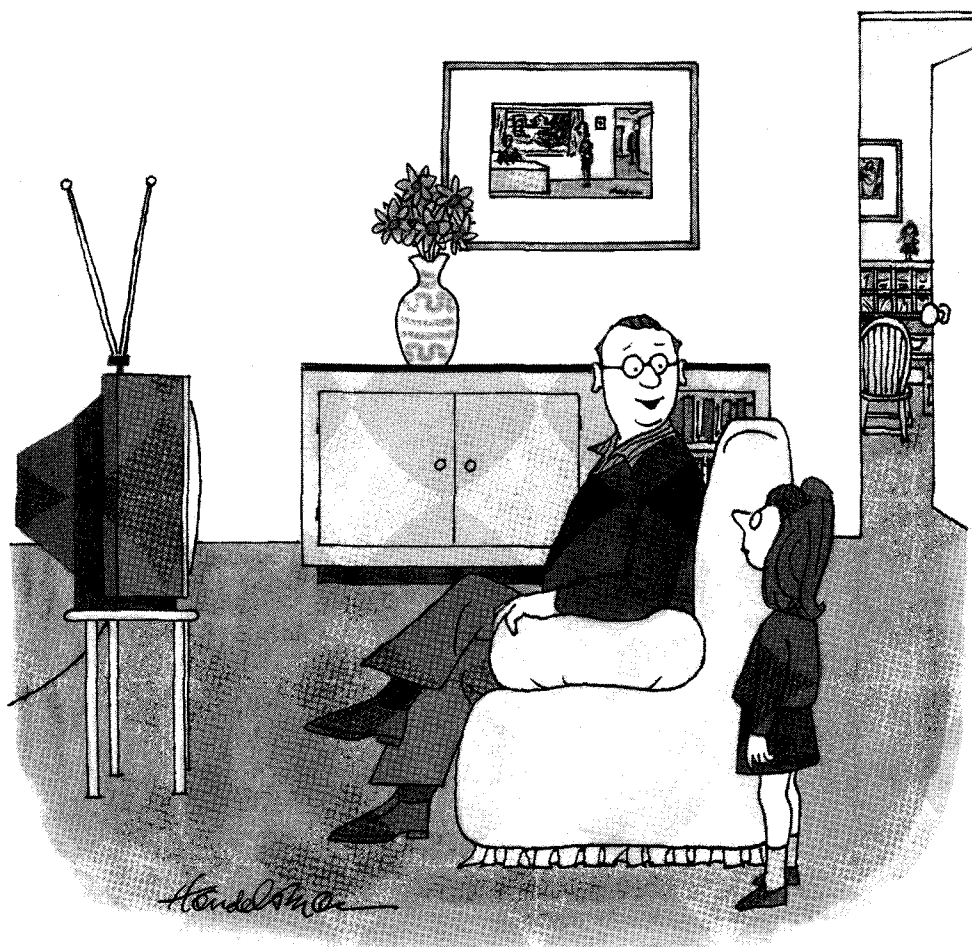
FISHERMAN'S TUXEDO
FROM PATAGONIA



THE RIGHT-FIELD-FOUL-POLE
SUIT FROM HUGO BOSS



CHALK-STRIPED FLANNEL SUIT
WITH SLIT PANTS FROM DKNY



"Of course Daddy could explain what a superconducting supercollider is, sweetie, but just at the moment Daddy is watching 'America's Most Wanted.'"

India in May of 1990 were willing to run any risk—including nuclear war—to avoid a disastrous military, and thus political, defeat in Kashmir.

There is no evidence that the Pakistani leadership or its intelligence services had advance knowledge of or were in any way involved in the initial uprising in Kashmir, which was triggered in January of 1990 when Indian police opened fire and killed fifty pro-independence demonstrators who were protesting what they viewed as the latest of India's "puppet" governments. But Pakistan did move quickly to exploit the unrest. By early spring, the Pakistanis were known to be operating at least thirty camps in their territory for the training of Kashmiri Muslims and were prepared to aid them in slipping across the border. Mass Muslim-led demonstrations of more than a hundred thousand people were organized in Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, to protest Indian rule. India

blamed its enemy, Pakistan, for its problems, although there was evidence that the protests were in part indigenous. India responded to the angry protests with a heightened police and military presence throughout Kashmir, and that led, almost inevitably, to brutal repression and shootouts. Between January and late April, as civilian control ebbed, hundreds of Kashmiris were shot dead in the street. India moved its crack Strike Corps into Rajasthan, within fifty miles of the border, and once again, as in 1987, there were fears in Islamabad of a preemptive Indian attack to cut off southern Pakistan from the north. Pakistan moved its 1st and 2nd Armored Corps toward the border.

The American intelligence community noticed an intense increase in Pakistani radar activity early in the year. Earlier reports showed that the Pakistani Air Force, working closely with officials from Pakistan's nuclear-weapons pro-

gram, had stepped up its F-16 training to practice what seemed to be the dropping of a nuclear bomb. Further intelligence, from Germany, reported that the Pakistanis had designed a nuclear warhead that could be fitted under the wing of an F-16, and that the design had gone through a series of wind-tunnel tests. Pakistan was also reported to have learned to program its in-flight computer system to provide the correct flight path for a nuclear-bomb run.

The language from New Delhi and Islamabad heated up. In mid-March, Ms. Bhutto visited a training camp inside the Pakistani-controlled part of Kashmir and pledged nearly five million dollars in support of "freedom fighters"—a phrase clearly aimed at provoking the Indian leadership. A few weeks later, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, India's new Prime Minister (he defeated Rajiv Gandhi in national elections in November of 1989, with the aid of the militant Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, or B.J.P.—the Indian People's Party), publicly warned Pakistan in a speech to the jingoist Indian Parliament that it "cannot get away with taking Kashmir without a war." Singh added that India would not allow Pakistan to achieve nuclear superiority. One leader of the B.J.P. went further and suggested to cheering members of Parliament that in case of war "Pakistan ceases to exist."

SOMETIME in the early spring of 1990, intelligence that was described as a hundred per cent reliable—perhaps an N.S.A. intercept—reached Washington with the ominous news that General Beg had authorized the technicians at Kahuta to put together nuclear weapons. Such intelligence, of "smoking gun" significance, was too precise to be ignored or shunted aside. The new intelligence also indicated that General Beg was prepared to use the bomb against India if necessary. Precisely what was obtained could not be learned, but one American summarized the information as being, in essence, a warning to India that if "you move up here"—that is, begin a ground invasion into Pakistan—"we're going to take out Delhi." Washington suddenly joined Islamabad and New Delhi in realizing that a crisis had developed. "I began to scream that what's going to happen is Brass Tacks all over again," Ambassador Oakley recalled. He had been serving on the National Security

Council during the confrontation in 1987, which was resolved by the direct intervention of two strong leaders, Pakistan's President Zia and India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. "Rajiv and Zia are gone, and this time they won't stop," Oakley said he warned Washington in 1990. "We'd better move before the momentum builds."

Washington decided to augment the available technical intelligence. The orbiting flight paths of American satellites were adjusted to increase the hour-to-hour overhead coverage of South Asia. The joint American-British listening post in Diego Garcia, in the Indian Ocean, which monitors both Pakistan and India, was provided with additional electronic-eavesdropping requirements (a move known at N.S.A. field stations as "tasking") and ordered to increase its coverage. Sometime in May, as conditions inside Kashmir worsened, an orbiting American satellite relayed photographs of what some officials believed was the evacuation of thousands of workers from Kahuta.

An American analyst who participated in White House situation-room meetings throughout the crisis described what happened next: "We thought the reason for the evacuation of Kahuta was that they expected a retaliatory attack by India, in response to a Pakistani first strike. We were keyed to an offensive ground strike"—into the Pakistani state of Sind—"by the Indians. The Pakistanis were going to cut it off with a nuke. We thought they'd go for Delhi."

At this point, the American analyst recalled a secret meeting he had had with Abdul Qadeer Khan during an international energy conference in Europe in the mid-nineteen-eighties: "I was told by Khan in no uncertain terms 'Never again. Whatever else occurs, even if we tell you we've terminated'—ceased working on the nuclear bomb—"I can tell you that I will not be allowed to terminate, because we must continue to show the Indians that we have the ability to never again be defeated at their hands."

There was further evidence that May of Pakistani intent: "We'd spotted a facility in the mountains"—in Balochistan, in southwestern Pakistan. "If there was a nuclear-storage facility, that had all the signs of being it." The Pakistani military were conducting high-explosive tests near the suspected storage facility. Such tests, which had been monitored by the

United States since the mid-nineteen-eighties, were an essential element of the nuclear-weapons process; nuclear fission is achieved by triggering precise, simultaneous explosions inside a warhead, which instantly compress the core of enriched uranium or plutonium. Initially, the test area seemed to be a normal facility, the analyst recalled, except that the Pakistani military protected it with an unusually high degree of security. Eventually, the intelligence community learned from a source inside Pakistan that A. Q. Khan had gone to the site for a visit—Khan was under constant surveillance—and the test site and its nearby storage area were considered to be nuclear-related. If the Pakistanis had manufactured more than a few weapons—there was talk in the White House that spring of as many as ten warheads—and if they truly expected a preemptive Indian attack, the weapons would have to be dispersed to Pakistani Air Force bases.

Just as expected, satellite and other intelligence later produced signs of a truck convoy moving from the suspected nuclear-storage site in Balochistan to a nearby Air Force base. "There were moving secure zones all over the convoy route," the analyst said, similar to the way, years ago, that the American military cleared the highways in front of its convoys carrying nuclear weapons. Once the Pakistani convoy reached the airfield, the pattern was repeated. "They had beefed up security," the analyst said. "People who normally worked on the flight line are all of a sudden sealed out of the area. They're not allowed to be there. All of this simple stuff becomes important. We've watched the Pakistanis go through normal alerts and drills, and you can tell the difference. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand what's going on, because you're dealing with the military, who work in set patterns. This is low-level human-intelligence crap. No big deal. We're watching for things to happen that never happened before. Their big mistake was putting on more security than they needed."

Eventually, the intelligence community picked up a frightening sight, the analyst recalled: "They had F-16s prepositioned and armed for delivery—on full alert, with pilots in the aircraft. I be-

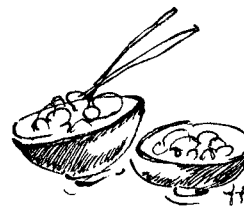
lieved that they were ready to launch on command and that that message had been clearly conveyed to the Indians. We're saying, 'Oh, shit.' We've been watching the revolution in Kashmir, the internal problems in India, and we look at the Pakistani pre-positioning. These guys have done everything that will lead you to believe that they are locked and loaded."

The Pakistani government had told Washington that it had intelligence—whose reliability was suspect, as was all Indian and Pakistani intelligence in moments of crisis—indicating that India was prepared to send its army across the border. "We were holding a session in the National Security Council conference room in the White House basement," the analyst said. "And one of our guys"—a senior military man who had served as defense attaché with the United States Embassy in New Delhi—"said we ought to focus on getting the Paks to hit Tarapur, not Delhi." A large reactor at Tarapur, north of Bombay, was known to be one of India's main sites for the chemical extraction of weapons-grade plutonium. "In other words, he wanted to do a tit for tat: Kahuta for Tarapur. It was the old limited-war issue: If they do a strike, what could we do to get them to neutralize each other?"

Former Ambassador Oakley, in his interview with me, depicted the intelligence analysts in Washington as being overwrought about the imminence of war and a nuclear exchange.

"We never had any *hard* indications that any nuclear warheads had been delivered to an airbase. You could *guess* that," Oakley said. "ISI was putting out all sorts of messages, but we had no evidence that a nuclear exchange was imminent." In his view, Oakley added, full-scale war between Pakistan and India would not break out until early fall, the end of the rainy season. "Once it began, there was a strong likelihood they would have gone all the way," he said. "I don't blame people [in Washington] for being nervous. That's the way intelligence analysts are supposed to work. But the evacuation of Kahuta is not necessarily evidence of war," he said, because "Pakistan has always been afraid" of a preemptive Indian raid on the nuclear-weapons center.

One American nuclear-intelligence



expert subsequently described Oakley's comments as a "classic case of what we were dealing with" in reporting to the State Department and the White House on an ally's nuclear-weapons program: "It's a warning situation, but they want smoking guns for everything. The guy is saying, 'Wait until the bombs are dropped on New Delhi.'"

RICHARD KERR was also persuaded by the intelligence that the chances of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan were great. "There's no question in my mind that we were right on the edge," the former C.I.A. deputy director recalled. "This period was very tense. The intelligence community believed that without some intervention the two parties could miscalculate—and miscalculation could lead to a nuclear exchange."

The fears of the intelligence community were impossible to ignore, even amid the crunch of a summit week. It was at this point that President Bush ordered a White House airplane sent to Moscow to pick up Robert Gates—who was part of a high-level advance team

preparing for the summit—and fly him to the rescue. One involved official asked rhetorically, "Why Gates? Because he went carrying the President's personal imprimatur: 'He's my top adviser on nuclear matters. I'm sending my No. 1 career intelligence official. He knows. He can't be bullshitted.'"

In his interview with me, Gates was quick to acknowledge that he was not an expert on India or Pakistan and had no personal relationship with the leadership of either country, but had indeed been sent to South Asia as the President's man, carrying special messages to President Khan in Islamabad and to Prime Minister Singh in New Delhi. "The President wanted somebody who could go discreetly and without an entourage," Gates said. "Somebody who spoke for him." Gates was being briefed as he was moving into action—standard operating procedure for a senior White House aide—and not until he actually began the mission, he said, "did I have a full sense of the danger." He added, "These guys"—in India and Pakistan—"felt their country was at stake."

The major reason for his initial lack

of alarm, Gates recalled, was the ho-hum attitude in Moscow toward the India-Pakistan standoff. Before leaving Moscow, he and Secretary of State James Baker "asked the Soviets to weigh in with the Indians," their longtime ally—a step that would have been automatic in the Cold War days. But the Soviets "basically pooh-poohed" the notion that there was a crisis, Gates said. "It eventually became clear that they were not going to weigh in, because they didn't want to expend the political capital and they didn't have the information" that Washington had.

The high-powered mission began on an ominous note: Gates and his companions, who included Richard N. Haass, the ranking National Security Council aide for the region, and John Kelly, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs, were stood up by Benazir Bhutto. President Bush had written a private note to the Pakistani Prime Minister, with whom he had established a good rapport the previous year, and the Gates team was expecting confirmation of a meeting place during a refuelling stop at Athens. Ms. Bhutto's reign as Prime Minister had sharply disappointed many of her supporters in Pakistan and elsewhere; they saw little evidence that she had the ability to run the government. There also were heated complaints of nepotism and corruption in her administration. Many Americans assigned to the Embassy in Islamabad and as military attachés sided with General Beg and President Khan in their intense power struggle against Ms. Bhutto. The infighting was often very ugly. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, its most clandestine intelligence agency, was known to have bugged many of Ms. Bhutto's meetings, and even videotaped her in private moments with her husband. Copies of some of that material had made their way to the large and very active C.I.A. station in Islamabad, whose agents—not unnaturally—discussed them with at least a few colleagues throughout the world. Many of these men, a well-informed congressional aide explained, saw Ms. Bhutto "as a nuisance," and not—as did many in Congress—as someone capable of giving Pakistan "a chance for democracy."

Ms. Bhutto's popularity at home had revived with her ardent support for the Kashmiri freedom fighters, as she de-



"We're pushing forty. Shouldn't we have a house, or something?"

scribed the Kashmiri Muslims in a series of jingoistic speeches that spring throughout Pakistan. As Gates set out on his mission, she was in Yemen, one of her stops on an extensive tour of the Gulf states, to drum up Islamic backing for her nation's demand for elections in Kashmir. She did not meet Gates, and even today he remains angry and perplexed about her slight. "First, they had said 'Let's meet in Cairo,'" Gates recalled. "I got word in Athens that we'd meet someplace else. She yanked my chain for four or five hours. Finally, she said, 'Why not come to Yemen?' I said, 'Screw it.' It was clear that she did not want to talk about it. She knew what I had to say."

Gates's main worry as he headed for South Asia was the essential instability of both governments, which he feared were "too weak to stop a war," he said. "There was the view that both sides were blundering toward a war, and we were afraid that it would go nuclear. And who knew what the consequences would be?" In addition to taking along Presidential letters urging restraint, Gates was authorized to tell the leadership in Islamabad and New Delhi that the United States was prepared to share its most sensitive satellite intelligence with both sides, so they would simultaneously be able to verify troop withdrawals—if they could be agreed upon—from border areas.

Gates said that he had made no effort to be especially tactful during his meetings with General Beg and President Khan, who were, after all, representing a loyal Cold War ally and a key partner in the Afghanistan war. "I'm not much of a diplomat," he told me. "We simply wanted to show them that they were bungling toward a war. The idea was to go in and voice our concerns, and also to show that we knew what we were talking about. I gave an explicit briefing to both sides—in excruciating detail." He said that he told the Pakistanis, "Look, I'm not here to solve the Kashmir problem or discuss regional arms control. I'm here because we think there is a short-



"We found her wandering at the edge of the forest. She was raised by scientists."

term problem that we want to defuse.' I looked straight at Beg and said, 'General, our military has war-gamed every conceivable scenario between you and the Indians, and there isn't a single way you win.' It was a tough message for a proud and bellicose Army chief of staff. Beg said nothing, and Gates detected no visible response. "He was very cool," Gates said. "That was the high point."

Gates was also accompanied by Oakley, who recalled, "The essential goal of the meeting was to get the message"—that Pakistan could not win a war with India—"to President Khan. It was quite clear that Khan had not been given a full briefing" on the risks of war by Beg, "who sat there looking smug. Khan became quite sober," Oakley said, after Gates warned him that if war breaks out "Don't expect any help from us."

One of General Beg's military colleagues subsequently gave me a blunt account of the Gates presentation. According to the officer, Gates angrily let the Pakistani government know that the United States had hard evidence that "we'd crossed the line" and developed nuclear warheads. The American criti-

cism prompted a bitter protest from President Khan. He accused the United States of being hypocritical in its sudden concern over Pakistani nuclear intentions. "Now, after the Afghanistan war is over, you are squeezing us," Khan was quoted as telling Gates. "You're telling me what's going on. Don't you also know what's going on in India and Israel? It's a double standard." Pakistan's fear, as it was said to have been relayed to Gates, was that a full-scale ground assault by India could dismember the nation within two weeks, as had happened in 1971, leaving the leadership with, in the Pakistani officer's words, "no option but to go nuclear." In the Pakistani officer's account, Khan and Beg did seek, with no success, a United States commitment to reward Pakistan for not using nuclear weapons in case of all-out war with India, by providing a full-scale airlift of conventional arms and ammunition, as had been done to bolster Israel in the early days of the 1973 Mideast war.

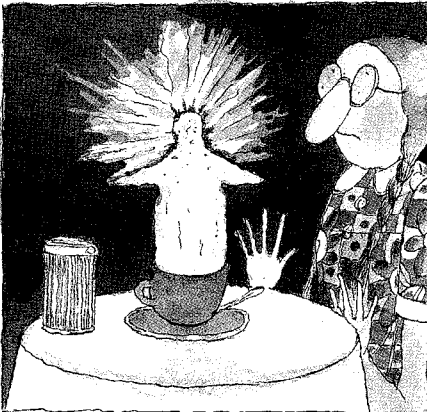
Both sides agreed, however, that the defining moment of the meeting came when Gates told the Pakistani leader-

TINY VISIONS

by Victoria Roberts



PHOENICIA LUGARNO, AGED FIVE, SEES THE PROFILE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER IN A RING OF ROTELLE PASTA.



IMELDA GOMEZ'S CAPPUC-CINO FROTHS TO REVEAL A PORTRAIT OF ST. TERESA.



OSVALDO OPEL SEES THE FACE OF THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL IN A LONG-LOST SOFT LENS.

ship, "You guys are going to have to stop supporting terrorism in Kashmir." President Khan then gave the American envoy what he needed for his trip to New Delhi: he assured him that the Pakistani training camps for Kashmiri insurgents would be shut down.

The Pakistani concession turned out to be essential, for as Gates left Islamabad events in Kashmir took a drastic turn for the worse. On May 21, 1990, Maulvi Muhammad Farooq, the senior Muslim cleric of Kashmir, was assassinated in his home by unidentified gunmen. Farooq was a moderate, who had campaigned peacefully for an independent Kashmir—an option rejected by both Pakistan and India. More than a hundred thousand mourners took to the streets of Srinagar, and Indian security forces, panicked, opened fire. As many as a hundred people were killed, and tension rose among both the Pakistani and the Indian forces on the border. Perhaps because of this renewed tension, Gates emerged from his May 21st meetings with the leadership in New Delhi with what he termed "a strong sense of their worry about the nation's fragility. They were worried about Pakistani meddling in Kashmir, and worried about the future of their secular state," he told me. "They talked of their concern about Hindu fundamentalism juxtaposed with Islamic fundamentalism—and the dangers both of those movements posed."

Gates said his message to the Indians—presented in separate meetings with top officials—was essentially the same as the one he gave the Pakistanis: "You guys got to lay off each other." In India's case, that meant stopping its infiltration into the Pakistani border state of Sind, and taking immediate steps to improve the human-rights situation in Kashmir. From the Indian point of view, Gates said, "It was the first time an American had come out and treated Pakistan and India as equals." The Indians responded with a significant concession: they agreed to let American military attachés of the United States Embassy go to the front in Kashmir and Rajasthan and see for themselves that no imminent invasion of Pakistan was in the works. The American attachés duly reported that the Indian units, including its vaunted Strike Corps, were in the process of closing down their exercises. That information was quickly relayed to

the Pakistani leadership, and over the next few days both armies moved their troops away from the borders and both foreign ministries opened discussions on confidence-building measures. By the end of June, the crisis was over.

In its aftermath are the inevitable questions about Pakistan's nuclear status—who knew what, and when? Oakley insisted, as did many former members of the Reagan and Bush Administrations, that the essential facts about Pakistan's inevitable emergence as a nuclear power were known fully in the late nineteen-eighties to the United States Congress, whose members "acquiesced"—as Oakley put it—in continued foreign aid to Pakistan because of the Afghanistan war and the enormous personal popularity of Prime Minister Bhutto in the United States. Oakley's point seemed to be that passive approval by Congress of bad policy somehow justified bad policy. In an interview, a former top-level Reagan Administration official went further and questioned the integrity of those members of Congress who publicly supported the Solarz and Pressler Amendments: "All this morality horseshit. We were caught in a dilemma, and I didn't know how to solve it: there was no way to stop the Pakistanis. Pakistan had been fucking around for years on the bomb. They weren't going to depend on us. What do you expect of the Pakistanis? All this talk about breaking the law—it's just a morality play. Of course everybody in Congress knew. The Administration was carrying out a popularly based policy in Afghanistan. If we'd cut off the aid to Pakistan, would we have been able to withstand the political heat from Congress?"

Nonetheless, one intelligence expert who has closely followed the nuclear situation from Washington, when asked to reflect on the India-Pakistan crisis, said that it might be time for the senior policy people in the White House, the State Department, and the C.I.A. to learn that there are "people outside"—such as those perennially disregarded arms-control officials responsible for the nation's nuclear-nonproliferation agenda—"who also understand the rules." He went on, "This crisis demonstrates that the question of 'Who out there can toss one of these?' may be the truly fundamental question for the next generation."

The expert's fears have no reverbera-

tions, for the near nuclear war in South Asia has remained an unknown event—a crisis that wasn't a crisis—with no lessons learned. In the fall of 1990, after Ms. Bhutto's ouster, senior officials of the State Department handed Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, the Pakistani Foreign Minister, a letter demanding that his nation destroy the nuclear-bomb cores known to be in existence. The American solution to the potential for a nuclear holocaust was to try to put the genie back in the bottle, as had been done throughout the nineteen-eighties.

There were other signs of business as usual. President Bush continued his policy of invoking the Pressler Amendment and not certifying Pakistan to be nuclear-free in 1991 and 1992, as he had in 1990, but he also permitted Pakistan to buy American-made arms from commercial firms, thus nullifying the impact of the law. Pakistan and India, while still refusing international inspection of suspected weapons facilities, continue today to publicly deny, as they did throughout the nineteen-eighties, that they have nuclear weapons.

IN a political-science honors thesis written in 1980, Richard Barlow, who was then a senior at Western Washington University, in Bellingham, Washington, analyzed the relationship between the collection of intelligence about Pakistan and the failure of American policymakers to stop Pakistan from going nuclear. The problem, he concluded, was not a lack of information about Pakistan's intent, but "a clear-cut failure of *policy* perpetuated by the *consumers* of intelligence." Correcting that failure would become his mission in government.

In 1985, after having worked two years for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Barlow made it to the big leagues—he was hired as a proliferation-intelligence officer by the C.I.A. Barlow was smart, he was committed, and he had a tremendous capacity for absorbing information—traits found in the best analysts of the intelligence community. Barlow looked the part: slender, with hazel eyes, light-brown hair, and a movie star's profile. And yet he also was very much unlike the public image of hard-nosed C.I.A. men; he was openly enthusiastic, and exuded an energetic reverence for his work and its responsi-

bility. "He brought the agency a unique skill," Richard Kerr, who was the C.I.A.'s deputy director for intelligence in 1985, acknowledged. "He was an investigative analyst. It was a different kind of skill from the kind we had historically used. We're doing more of it now."

Barlow quickly came to learn that there was solid information sitting in C.I.A. files that was not being acted upon. While rummaging through old State Department cables, he realized the significance of a case involving a California couple who had exported dozens of high-speed cathode-ray oscilloscopes and special cameras to Hong Kong, where they were picked up by Pakistani agents. Barlow knew that the devices were also widely used in nuclear-weapons development to calibrate the uniformity of compression on a nuclear core—the implosion that triggers chain reaction—from the explosives inside the warhead. There could be no other use, he reasoned, for the export of so many exquisitely engineered devices. He found an overlooked link between the purchase, which was shipped through Hong Kong, and the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, which, as the C.I.A. knew, was then playing a major role in the development of a nuclear bomb. There were consultations with Justice Department attorneys and the Commerce Department, whose agents were nervous but pleasantly surprised to get help from someone in the C.I.A. Barlow even personally briefed federal prosecutors on the technical aspects of the case, enabling them to make clear—without violating national security—that the high-speed oscilloscopes were of great importance to Pakistan's nuclear-weapons work.

Even as Barlow began his digging, some senior State Department officials were worried that too much investigation would create what Barlow called "embarrassment for Pakistan and trigger the Solarz Amendment, which would cut off all aid." Protecting the Afghanistan war had emerged as a major policy of the State Department's Bureau of Near East and South Asia Affairs, which was responsible for Pakistani policy. It was also considered essential by the C.I.A.'s clandestine-operations directorate, whose officers were deeply in-

volved in the "covert" war that, as everyone in Washington understood, wasn't covert at all.

Nonetheless, at a high-level meeting in mid-1986 Barlow was designated the C.I.A.'s delegate to the Nuclear Export Violations Working Group (N.E.V.W.G.), a newly formed top-secret panel that brought together the policy, law-enforcement, and intelligence communities in an effort to stop illegal American exports to Pakistan and other non-nuclear nations. Barlow took his work seriously, and volunteered—with the approval of Fred McGoldrick, the director of the State Department's Office of Nonproliferation and Export Policy, and the chairman of the N.E.V.W.G.—to help set up an undercover operation in an effort to stop yet another planned Pakistani purchase of nuclear-related materials. The State Department's Near East Bureau was not told of the planned operation, for fear that the officers there would tip off the Pakistanis, as they had done in the past, by sending a formal diplomatic protest (known as a *démarche*) to the Pakistani government. "We were sure they'd manage to screw it up," one N.E.V.W.G. member said of the Near East Bureau. "They were more guilty of clientitis than anyone." Barlow and his law-enforcement colleagues were convinced that the



State Department's intent in sending the *démarches*, which were inevitably ignored, was simply to signal Pakistan that the cops in America knew what was going on.

McGoldrick, who is still chairman of the working group on nuclear-export violations, agreed to the delay in informing his colleagues in the Near East Bureau of the pending operation. "The only thing we had going for us"—he and other working-group members—"was the Pressler and Solarz Amendments," McGoldrick said. "The absolute imperative in this building was to get the Russians out of Afghanistan. I can't quarrel with that. But it has to be done in accordance with the law. There were many more reports of covert procurement—of nuclear-related goods—in the case of Pakistan than with Iraq. For all the hoopla, Iraq didn't take all that much out of here."

As McGoldrick's panel reached more

deeply inside the Pakistani operations in the United States, the atmosphere grew tense. At one point, Barlow recalled, the C.I.A.'s Dick Kerr summoned senior State Department officials to a meeting and initiated a pointed discussion about the steady flow of *démarches* and highly classified internal American intelligence analyses between Washington and Islamabad.

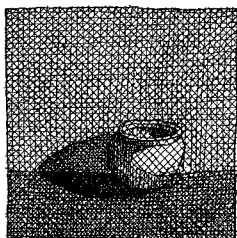
In his interview with me, Kerr acknowledged that the Near East Bureau had been extremely active, just as Barlow and others alleged. "What they were doing it for was to persuade the Pakistanis to stop," he said. The Near East Bureau "was trying to change Pakistan's behavior," he went on. "They didn't want the relationship to break."

Others in the United States government had a less benign view of the State Department's approach to Pakistan. "We still have cases on Pakistan and we still don't tell State about it," a senior Customs Service official told me recently, in anger. "The State Department constituted a security problem for us. One of the things about being a dumb gumshoe is that we didn't have to worry about foreign policy. The law is the law—and the law is the only thing I go by." The Customs Service official, who is still in the government, praised Barlow for "telling it the way it was at a time State was jerking me around," and said, "The guy was as topnotch as any I met. He laid it on the line."

Some superiors and peers, on the other hand, viewed Barlow as single-minded and difficult to control. "The most dangerous problem we have in our business is zealotry—people who have a mission," Richard Kerr said. "Richard bordered on that. When others disagreed with his analysis, he made it a matter of integrity, as opposed to a matter of judgment."

The N.E.V.W.G.'s undercover operation led to a highly publicized arrest, in Pennsylvania, in July of 1987, of a Pakistani-born Canadian named Arshad Z. Pervez: he was seized while attempting to buy twenty-five tons of a specially strengthened steel for use—as Barlow knew—in Pakistan's uranium-enrichment program. There was now little doubt about Pakistan's nuclear inten-

tions. The arrest created a furor among those members of Congress committed to nonproliferation, including Senator Glenn and Representative Solarz. Congress, obviously more concerned about safeguarding aid for the Afghanistan war than about stopping the spread of nuclear weapons in South Asia, nonetheless approved a foreign-aid package of four hundred and eighty million dollars for Pakistan in December. A dismayed John Glenn subsequently told the *Times* that the threat of nuclear proliferation "is a far greater danger to the world than being afraid to cut off the flow of aid to Afghanistan," and added, "It's the short-term versus the long-term." In January, six months after the arrest of Pervez, President Reagan finally invoked the Solarz Amendment, as he was



compelled to do under the law, and then immediately waived its provisions, clearing the way for the American aid. The President was telling Pakistan that it could have its money—and its bomb.

Barlow received official praise for his work on the Pervez case, and spent hundreds of hours coordinating the inevitable array of disputes between the intelligence, foreign-policy, and law-enforcement communities. He was offered (and rejected) a job as a special agent by the Customs Service and given a note of personal commendation, relayed to Kerr by Abraham Sofaer, the State Department's legal adviser. By mid-1987, Barlow had emerged as the government's leading expert on illegal Pakistani procurement.

He produced an extensive analysis for the Department of Justice and the Customs Service on the hundreds of documents found in Pervez's apartment. He was brought into a sensitive case involving possibly illegal State Department approval of licenses to the Pakistani Embassy in Washington for equipment whose export had previously been denied—for nuclear-proliferation reasons—by the Commerce Department. There were many other cases in which high-tech goods, approved for export by Washington, turned out to have a significant application to Pakistan's nuclear program.

After Pervez's arrest, Representative Solarz, who was obviously concerned

about the violation of his amendment, requested a top-secret briefing by the C.I.A. and the State Department on Pakistani bomb procurement. Barlow was assigned to accompany David W. Einsel, the C.I.A.'s senior nonproliferation officer, to the briefing. It would be Barlow's first appearance before Congress.

Before going, Barlow was instructed by Charles Burke, his immediate superior in the C.I.A., to tell the truth, if asked. Barlow recalled having no anxiety about the briefing. "I assumed Congress had been briefed by State on the extent of Pakistani procurement activity in the United States," he said. But that briefing marked the beginning of his nightmare. "I wish I had called in sick," he told me.

Barlow had worked closely with Einsel, a retired Army major general, who had been brought to the agency in 1985 by William Casey, and he knew that Einsel had seen the highly classified reports and analyses that were available on Pakistan's extensive nuclear-related procurement activities inside the United States. "I knew his state of knowledge," Barlow recalled. "I knew exactly what he knew. Einsel's testimony was highly evasive, and deliberately so."

Barlow was disturbed because Solarz made it clear that he had a broad definition of what constituted a violation of his amendment. "I don't care if the Pakistanis ordered it"—American-made equipment—"by mail order from abroad, or if they went to Germany to buy it," Barlow quoted Solarz as saying. "As far as I'm concerned, that's a violation." At one point, Barlow said, Solarz turned to him and asked a direct question: "Have there been other cases?" "I said to myself, 'You don't know?'" He started interrogating me like a prosecutor. I was told to tell the truth and did."

Barlow testified that, indeed, the C.I.A. did know of "scores" of other Pakistani attempts to violate American export law. He also tried to tell the subcommittee something else it did not know: that the United States government had evidence directly tying one of Pervez's collaborators, a retired Pakistani general, to Pakistan's government and its nuclear-weapons project. At that point, Barlow said, "Einsel shut me up and I was never allowed to get into specifics."

A senior government official who was outside the hearing room (he had not

been cleared to attend the briefing) recalled what happened next: "I was outside when Robert Peck"—the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, who died last year—"rushed out and said to me, 'You've got to testify. That s.o.b. Barlow is telling them all sorts of things, and you've got to straighten it out.' I went in to the hearing, but I didn't know what to say." He had credibility with Solarz and his subcommittee, the official acknowledged. Solarz declared that he was "appalled" at the extent of the intelligence reports. "I told him that not all intelligence reports are accurate," the official said. He understood that his function was to somehow expunge Barlow's testimony—to smooth it over—and he did his job. "I cooled it out," he said. The official made it clear that it was not his proudest moment in government service: "I didn't know what I was getting into."

Einsel, who retired to Ohio in 1989, characterized as "nuts" Barlow's allegation that he withheld information from Congress. "There is always information that is in process, that's ongoing," the former general said in a telephone interview. "You generally give Congress evaluated answers—not all the rumors that are flying. That's where he and I get off on a tangent. The man was obsessed with passing on his latest rumors to the Hill, and whether they proved correct didn't matter to him. That's the problem."

After his testimony, Barlow became a marked man in some offices inside the Central Intelligence Agency. "It upset me very much that I was forced to be involved in something like this," he told me later. "I had no idea that Congress had not been informed of the cases." There was an almost immediate payback. "Einsel went crazy," Barlow said. "I was told that my personal behavior at the hearing had been unprofessional. I was accused of being un-

patriotic and almost scuttling the Afghanistan program. I was viewed as being disloyal."

Within days, the C.I.A.'s nonproliferation office was being pressured by Einsel and the State Department's Near East Bureau to fire Barlow or, at the least, remove him from the Pakistan account. Six weeks later, Barlow's formal job description was rewritten to remove him from any responsibility for Pakistan. Richard Kerr intervened and told him to "continue doing what I'm doing," Barlow recalled. Not long after that, however, he was again offered a job with the Customs Service. A year later, he accepted the job and resigned from the C.I.A., with mixed feelings. "I still think it's the best agency in the government," he said.

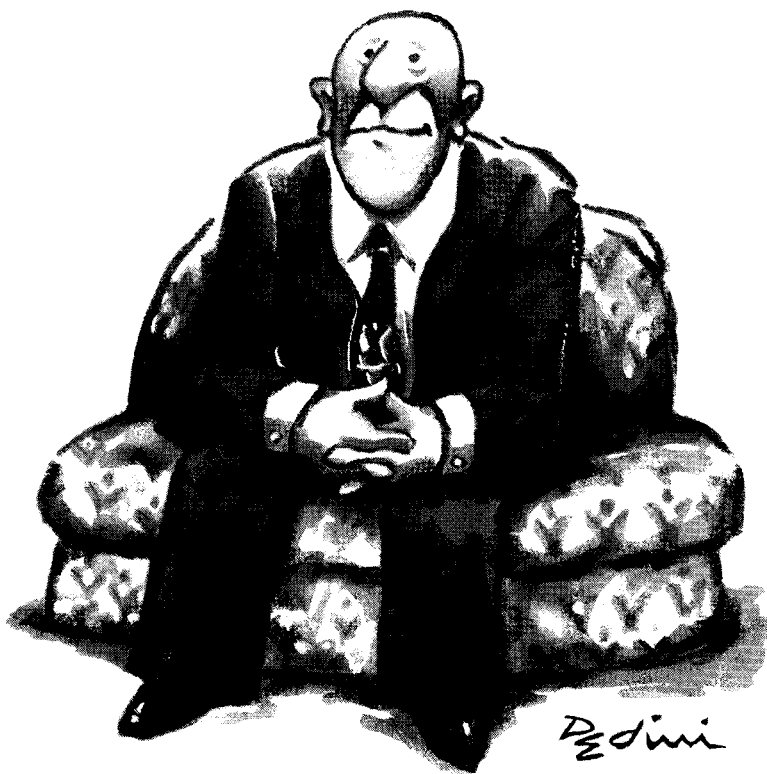
IN early 1989, Barlow was forced to change jobs again—this time for personal reasons—and joined the Pentagon's Office of Non-Proliferation Policy. There were renewed contacts with the N.E.V.W.G., whose anti-Pakistani activities had dropped off precipitously the year before, and renewed contacts with law-enforcement officials. Barlow was

once again chasing Pakistani nuclear procurement.

The Office supervisor, Gerald G. Oplinger, who was a longtime government expert on nonproliferation, also had his bureaucratic problems with Barlow. "He was smart, with a photographic memory," Oplinger said. "A very persistent guy who doesn't kowtow and who doesn't like to do scutwork." There was also no question that Barlow was knowledgeable and capable, and Oplinger, before retiring from the government in April, recommended him for promotion. Oplinger knew that Barlow had enemies from his days in the C.I.A., the bitterest of whom were those members of the clandestine service who had been involved in the Afghanistan war.

Barlow went about his business without incident, so he thought, until July of 1989. Then he learned that the United States government was once again distorting intelligence on Pakistan's nuclear capability. He had prepared a comprehensive analysis on Pakistan's nuclear capability for Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney and other senior officials. The paper cited what Barlow and many others in the intelligence community understood to be persuasive data showing that the F-16 aircraft previously delivered to Pakistan had been modified to deliver nuclear weapons. Barlow's paper was complemented by a separate Defense Intelligence Agency study, which reached the same conclusion.

All this gave the government a big problem. President Bush, after his June meeting with Benazir Bhutto, had agreed to sell sixty of the aircraft, a sale of a billion six hundred million dollars that the Pentagon—and Pakistan—badly wanted. But that sale hinged on the Pentagon's assurances to Solarz's subcommittee that the Pakistani government would not modify the F-16s for nuclear delivery. Fur-



While he was in Paris, Warren knew Picasso, Miró, Hemingway, Stravinsky, Cocteau, and Fitzgerald. Nothing ever came of it.

thermore, Barlow was involved just at that time with investigating four major criminal cases involving senior officers of the Pakistani Army who had attempted to make illegal purchases in the United States or abroad of American-made nuclear-related materials, including highly enriched uranium. One of the cases involved evidence showing that Pakistan was attempting to obtain dual-use items for its nuclear program by claiming that the materials were to be used for its F-16 fleet. The State Department's Near East Bureau had learned of Barlow's activity only a few days before.

On August 2, 1989, Arthur Hughes, a newly appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, testified before the Solarz subcommittee that the F-16s to be sold to Pakistan would be stripped of nuclear wiring before delivery. To deliver a nuclear bomb, therefore, Hughes said, "it first would be necessary to replace the entire wiring package of the aircraft." Hughes assured Solarz, in response to a question, that the F-16s to be sold to Pakistan were not nuclear-capable unless the nuclear wiring, or some modification of it, was replaced.

Barlow knew that the Hughes testimony was totally contrary to the analyses that had previously been prepared. The fact that the Pakistani Air Force had practiced low-level F-16 delivery of nuclear weapons was widely known throughout the American intelligence

community. The primitive delivery system required very little in the way of electronics or special wiring. Barlow informed his superiors, including Gerald Brubaker, his immediate supervisor, of his problems with the testimony, and urged that it be corrected.

Two days later, Brubaker called Barlow into his office and, with no warning, handed him a letter of termination. He stood accused, as he did not know at the time, of being a national-security risk to the United States. He was stripped of all his classified clearances and given three weeks to clear out of his office. Barlow decided to fight the dismissal. He spent the next eighteen months assigned to a Defense Department personnel pool, under surveillance by Pentagon security officers. He learned later that the "national-security risk," according to classified documents released to him under the Freedom of Information Act, was the fear of Brubaker and his superiors that Barlow would go, without authorization, to Representative Solarz and tell him the truth. "Would I have done it?" Barlow recently said, in astonishment. "Hell, no. I was trained to work within the system." Nonetheless, over the eighteen months, Pentagon investigators, on the pretext that they were dealing with a national-security threat, began looking into his personal life, his finances, his taxes, and false allegations that he had been fired from the C.I.A. and from the Customs Service.

Barlow has repeatedly stated that Gerald Brubaker and other officials made a concerted effort in 1989—as he was looking for other government and private-sector jobs—to impugn his reputation by spreading lies about his general reliability. Brubaker and the other officials named by Barlow categorically deny those charges. Barlow remains convinced, he said, that his firing and other adverse actions against him stemmed from his refusal to stop working with federal law-enforcement agents to investigate Pakistan's illegal nuclear-related purchases in the United States.

Brubaker, in a telephone interview, maintained that Barlow's dismissal resulted solely from his "poor performance," and not from a government-wide conspiracy to do him in because of his stand on Pakistan. "He is incompetent and insubordinate—period," Brubaker said. "He didn't do what he was told, and he has parlayed this into a bigger issue."

Two documents obtained by Barlow under the Freedom of Information Act challenge Brubaker's assertions. An internal Pentagon memorandum shows that Brubaker—whose personal antagonism toward Barlow was widely known—did not complain of insubordination at the time of the firing but instead "expressed concern" that Barlow would provide "classified information" to Congress. A handwritten notation made four days later shows that Barlow's top-secret clearances were to be suspended because he was a potential "national security" threat.

In May of 1990, after an eight-month investigation, the Pentagon determined that the security charges against Barlow were false. In a formal memorandum, Barlow was told that "after thorough investigation . . . any question of your trustworthiness for access to sensitive information was resolved in a manner completely favorable to you." His top-secret security clearances were reinstated, but the Pentagon did not restore his clearances to compartmentalized intelligence, without which no intelligence officer can do his job. Barlow remained on duty in the personnel pool, arranging civic luncheons and obtaining computers for public schools in Washington. In August, the Defense De-



"Very funny."

partment offered Barlow and his attorneys a settlement of twenty-six thousand dollars. Acceptance would mean that Barlow could not take his complaints to Congress or to any executive agency. There was an impasse. Donald Mancuso, the director of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, then offered Barlow a chance to become a special agent, or a consultant, if he agreed to disclose any potential criminal wrongdoing about which he had firsthand knowledge. He agreed to do so—reluctantly, he said—and thus became, in the eyes of many of his former colleagues, a whistleblower. He told Mancuso everything he knew about the C.I.A., the State Department, and the Pentagon coverup of Pakistan's nuclear-purchasing activities in the United States. Barlow was interrogated for two weeks, and his allegations were referred to the Inspectors General of the Department of Defense, the State Department, and the Central Intelligence Agency.

Not surprisingly, all the initial I.G. reports absolved their agencies of any criminal wrongdoing, but pressure to reopen the case is currently being put on the Pentagon by Sherman Funk, the State Department I.G., as well as by Senator Bingaman, of New Mexico. Further doubts about the efficacy of the Pentagon's inquiry have been raised in a sworn affidavit from Gerald Oplinger obtained by Barlow's attorneys, Paul Warnke and James Duff. In its I.G. report, the Pentagon had accused Oplinger of deliberately inflating his annual evaluation of Barlow in order to avoid "an unpleasant personnel situation." In his affidavit, Oplinger angrily responded, "This is a serious charge, and devoid of merit." He further noted that one of the Pentagon I.G.'s reports, prepared by Navy Captain O. M. Horstman, was said to be based on an interview with him. "The fact is," Oplinger wrote, "I have never been interviewed by Horstman nor by anyone identified to me" as representing Horstman's office.

In his interview with me, Richard Kerr acknowledged that Barlow's essential allegation was true: David Einsel did not give "full briefings to the Hill" on Pakistan's procurement activities. "I think Einsel fretted too much over how far to go, and he did not know all the details," Kerr said. He added that Barlow's "knowledge on Pakistan was



"I now declare you divorced, reversing my decision of three years ago pronouncing you man and wife."

greater than anyone else's in the agency," and that "there was an inability of Einsel to connect to others on the staff." The former C.I.A. deputy director added, generously, "I don't think it was an attempt to conceal the facts, but a difference of opinion over what to share."

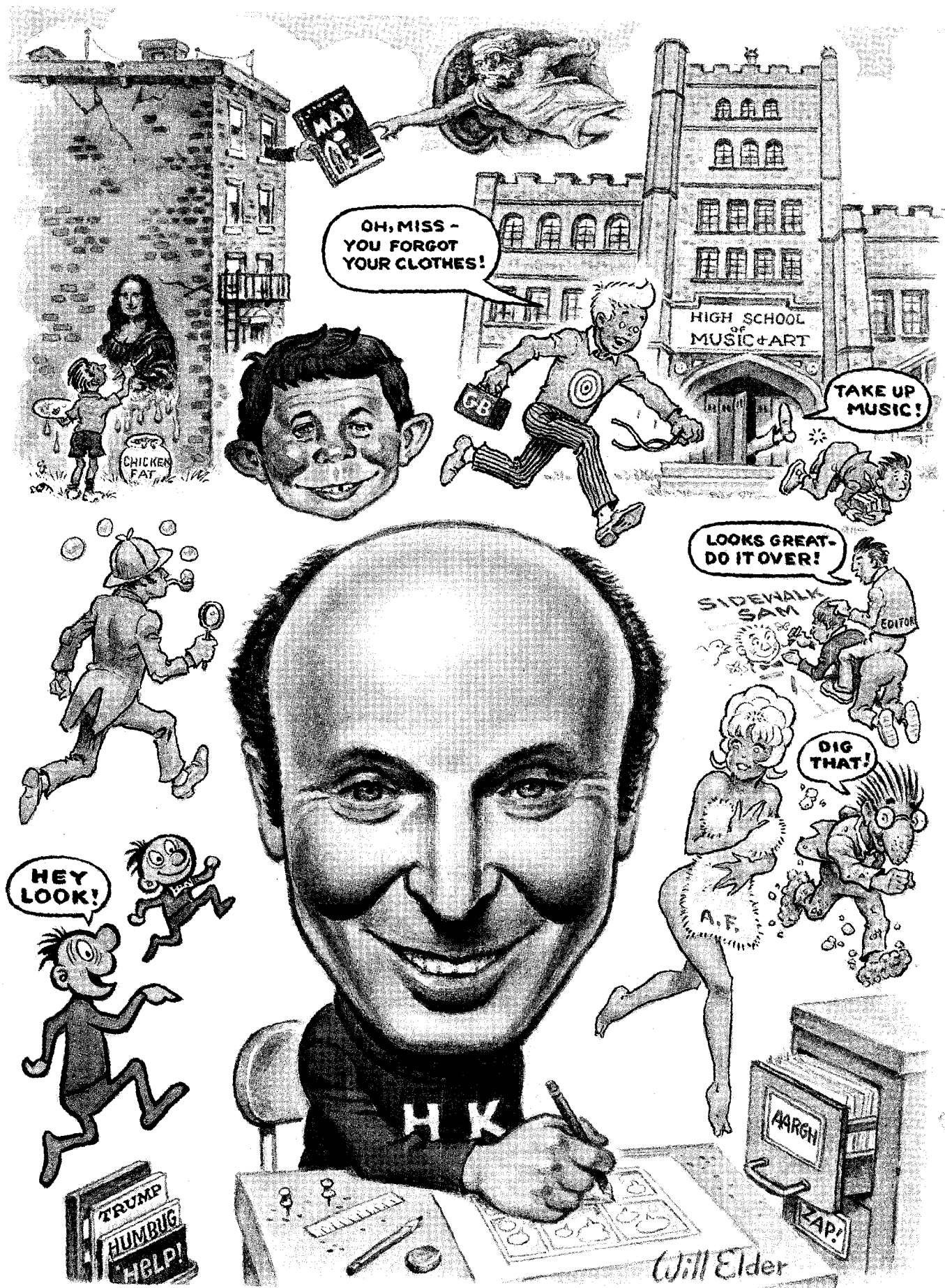
Such talk of absolution does little to soothe Barlow, who has suffered through what he calls a "Kafkaesque hell" since August of 1989. "There was no legitimate national-security issue involved" in his dismissal, Barlow said, in explaining why he was continuing to press the issue. "If you let the Pentagon get away with this, any time they want to destroy someone who is threatening their interest all they have to do is to instruct his superior to tell Security that the person has an alleged intent to engage in classified whistleblowing, and unleash the machinery."

NO judicial proceeding can repay Richard Barlow for his lost years, his shattered career, and his lost self-esteem. And Congress can do little today about testimony that wasn't presented in 1987 or 1989—or about testimony that was manipulated.

Stephen Solarz, who lost his congressional seat last November, after nine terms, acknowledged that he and others

who cared about nonproliferation had been constantly trying to balance that concern with a desire to support President Reagan in the Afghanistan war. "There were legitimate concerns that the Afghan war might spill over to Pakistan, and I felt we needed to give the President flexibility," Solarz told me recently. "I didn't want us to be in a worst-case scenario in case the Soviets moved across the border. I thought I was being responsible at the time." What he could not understand, he added, was how irresponsible the Reagan Administration had been. "If what Barlow says is true, this would have been a major scandal of Iran-Contra proportions, and the officials involved would have had to resign," Solarz said. "We're not dealing with minor matters. Stopping the spread of nuclear weapons is one of the major foreign-policy issues of the nation—not to mention the law of the land."

And not to mention the fact that in May of 1990 some of the bombs that were not stopped in the Reagan and Bush years were almost put to use. And that there are many more still out there. And that India, frightened and besieged today by terrorist bombings and growing Hindu fundamentalism, remains always willing to fix the blame for its troubles on Pakistan. ♦



Harvey Kurtzman, by Will Elder, Kurtzman's closest friend and collaborator for forty years. In the eyes of many a rebellious preteen of the nineteen-fifties, the original Mad Comics artists—Kurtzman, Elder, Wallace Wood, and Jack Davis—were heroes.

KURTZMAN'S MAD WORLD

HARVEY KURTZMAN was a New Yorker. He was born in Brooklyn, in 1924; moved with his family to the Bronx; and went to high school in Manhattan and launched his career as a cartoonist and comic-book impresario there. As a kid, he was a street artist—drawing comic strips on the pavement with chalk. He joined the Army during the Second World War, and after his discharge he went to work for the wildest and most notorious of all the New York comic-book publishers: E.C., whose line of grisly horror comics (including “The Vault of Horror” and “The Crypt of Terror”) occasioned the 1954 congressional investigations into comics and, eventually, the self-censoring Comics Code. Kurtzman disliked the horror comics, though, and he made his living, and his early reputation, writing and drawing war comics for E.C.; they were memorable for their marriage of realistic writing—conscientiously, even obsessively researched—and a slightly abstract, animated, bounding cartoon style.

In 1952, he urged E.C.’s publisher, William Gaines, to publish a satirical comic book. Gaines, who was game for almost anything, agreed, and the result, in the autumn of 1952, was *Mad*. The first issue consisted solely of takeoffs on other E. C. comic-book genres, but soon Kurtzman turned his attention to the whole exploding world of the American media—to Howdy Doody and the Western and the new youth movies, and even to the classic Disney cartoons. *Mad*’s panels were a riot of manic detail, and overflowed with indignation at the absurdities of the adult world of the fifties. Kurtzman’s *Mad* was the first comic enterprise that got its effects almost entirely from parodying other kinds of popular entertainment. Like Lenny Bruce, whom he influenced, Kurtzman saw that the conventions of pop culture ran so deep in the imagination of his audience—and already stood at so great a remove from real experience—that you could create a new kind of satire just by inventorying them. To say that this became an influential manner in American comedy is to understate the case. Almost all American satire today follows a

formula that Harvey Kurtzman thought up.

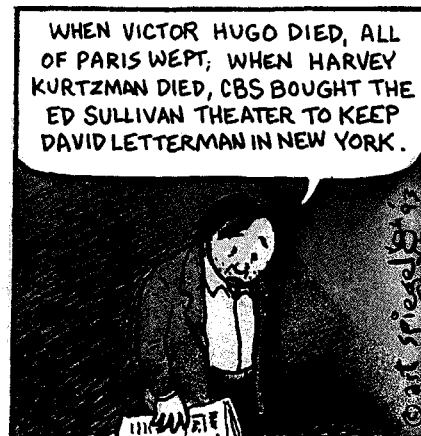
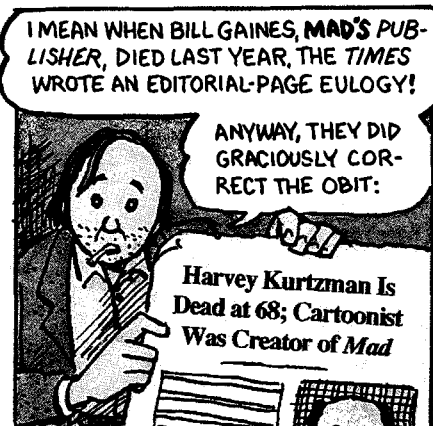
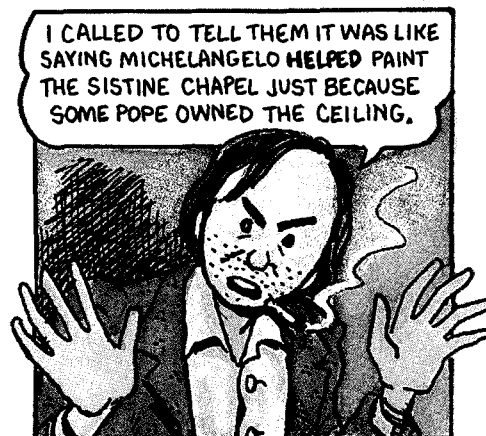
His was such a sturdy and easily replicable kind of humor that, once *Mad* had been launched and converted into a full-fledged magazine, it didn’t need him to keep it going. Having invented a new kind of comedy, Kurtzman left *Mad* in the middle of 1956. Hugh Hefner, then at the first height of his fame, offered to bankroll a new satirical magazine for him, and Kurtzman founded *Trump*, which was, as he put it, a kind of glossy *Mad*—a big-budget *Mad*. But Hefner pulled the plug on *Trump* after two memorable issues, and after that Kurtzman was never quite able to find a vessel for his talent. In the late fifties and early sixties, he ran a couple of smaller, maverick magazines, *Humbug* and *Help!*, which were influential for a while and, more important, became places where young cartoonists could apprentice. But they folded, too, and by 1962 Kurtzman had gone back to work for Hefner, for whom he wrote and drew, with Will Elder, “Little Annie Fanny” for more than twenty years.

For many of Kurtzman’s young admirers, this was an embarrassment. Kurtzman belonged to an older generation; he had made fun of the values of the entertainment world but, unlike his best disciples, at some level he also embraced them. This was, in a sense, his limitation, yet it was also the source of a complete lack of cynicism, which radiated from his life and still radiates from his work. In his last years, Kurtzman, in addition to working as a cartoonist, became a teacher, a guru—a man who impressed on his students the worth of the underloved art of cartooning. There has been scarcely a single cartoonist or animator of note in the last forty years—from R. Crumb and Art Spiegelman to Monty Python’s Terry Gilliam and the French cartoonist Goscinny, the co-inventor of “*Astérix*”—who did not come under his direct influence and encouragement. To make a significant advance in one’s art and then to instruct a generation of apprentices in the dignity of their craft perhaps remains the best definition of what it means to be a master.

—ADAM GOPNIK

H.K. (R.I.P.)

BY ART SPIEGELMAN



EVEN MOST OF HARVEY'S CARTOONING STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS DIDN'T QUITE REALIZE THAT THE KIND, UNASSUMING GUY THEY CALLED *TEACH*, THE GUY ROGER PRICE ONCE DESCRIBED AS LOOKING "LIKE A BEAGLE WHO IS TOO POLITE TO MENTION THAT SOMEONE IS STANDING ON HIS TAIL" WAS ACTUALLY...

A FURSHLUGGINER GENIUS!

I'VE ASKED ART SPIEGELMAN HERE TO SHOW YOU SLIDES OF HIS WORK... IT'S A CHANCE FOR YOU TO BE EXPOSED TO HIS FRESH NEW PERSPECTIVES, AND IT'S A CHANCE FOR HIM TO MEET YOU, TOMORROW'S TOP CARTOONISTS, TODAY...

BUT MAINLY IT'S A CHANCE FOR ME TO DO A CLASS WITHOUT LIFTING EVEN A PINKIE!

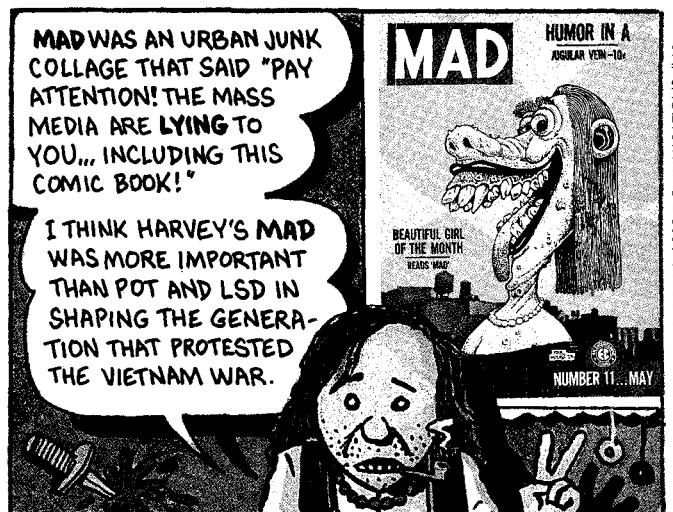
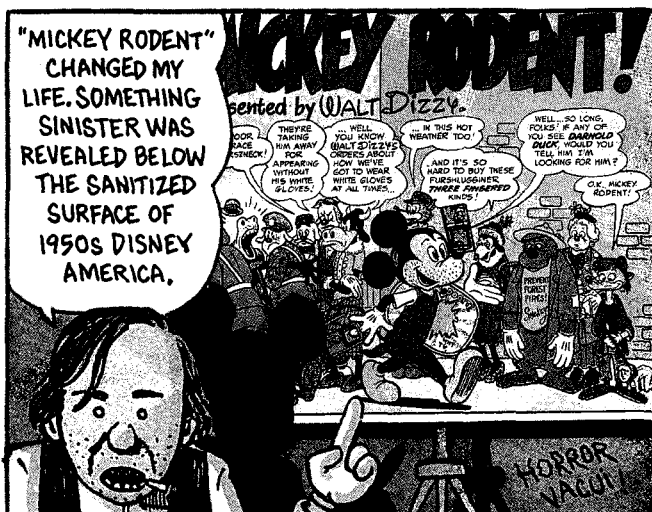
I'M AN OLD MAN, BY GEORGE!

BUT HEY, LOOK, HARV. I DIDN'T BRING SLIDES OF MY WORK. I BROUGHT SLIDES OF YOUR WORK! AFTER ALL, YOU'RE WHAT MADE ME WANNA BE A CARTOONIST!



IT WAS 1988. I SHOWED HIS CLASS THE RIGOROUS STRUCTURING AND JAZZY RHYTHMS THAT HARVEY BROUGHT TO HIS EARLY "HEY LOOK" PAGES, AND I TALKED ABOUT MAD.

SELF-REFLEXIVE AND CHEERFULLY VULGAR, HARVEY'S EARLY MAD COMIC BOOK WAS LIVELIER AND MORE SUBVERSIVELY ANARCHISTIC THAN THE LATER MAGAZINE.

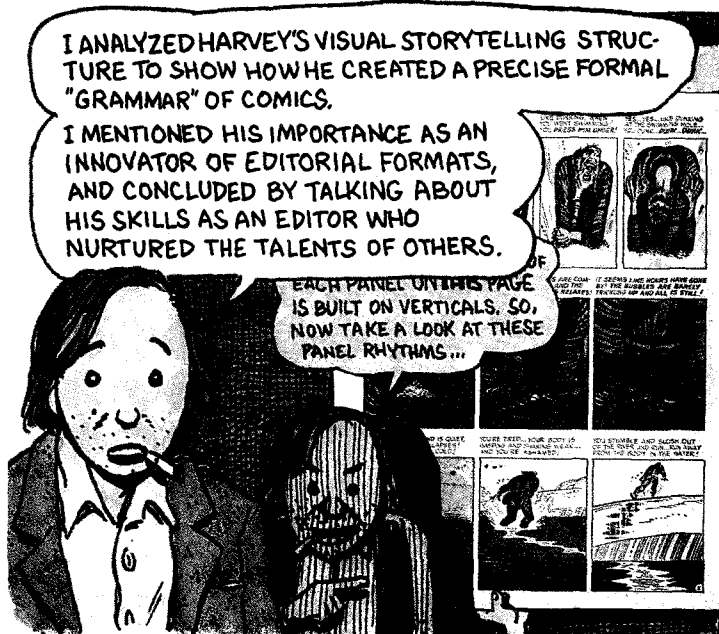


© 1948, 1976 HARVEY KURTZMAN

"MICKEY RODENT" AND MAD © 1954, 1982 E.C. PUBLICATIONS, INC.



"LITTLE ANNIE FANNY" © 1969 PLAYBOY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



THE CLASS SAT IN AWE. SARAH DOWNS, HARVEY'S ASSISTANT, WAS WEEPING SOFTLY. ONLY HARVEY'S SWEET, FRAIL VOICE, TREMBLING WITH THE PARKINSON'S DISEASE THAT RAVAGED HIM, BROKE THE SILENCE.

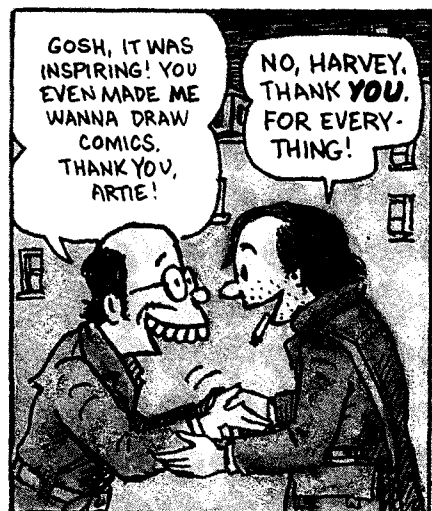


"TWO-FISTED TALES" © 1952, 1979 WILLIAM M. GAINES.

AFTERWARDS HARVEY GLOWED WITH PLEASURE. HE WARMLY CLASPED MY HAND.

I LOOKED LOVINGLY AT MY ROLE MODEL, AND FOR A LONG MOMENT WE EMBRACED...

MY MENTOR WAS WHISPERING SOMETHING TO ME. HE WAS BARELY AUDIBLE:



FICTION

WEREWOLVES IN THEIR YOUTH

BY MICHAEL CHABON

I HAD known him as a bulldozer, as a samurai, as an android programmed to kill, as Plastic Man and Titanium Man and Matter-Eater Lad, as a Buick Electra, as a Peterbilt truck, and even, for a week, as the Mackinac Bridge, but it was as a werewolf that Timothy Stokes finally went too far. I wasn't there when it happened. I was down in the ravine at the edge of the schoolyard, founding a capital for an empire of ants. "Now, of course, this right here, this lovely structure, is the Temple of El-bok," I explained to the ants, adopting the tone my mother employed to ease newlyweds through the emptied-out rooms of the depressed housing market in which she spent her days. I pointed to a pyramid of red clay at the center of a plaza paved with the crazy cross-hatching of my handprints. "And this, naturally, is the Palace of the Ant Emperor. But, ha ha, you knew that, of course. O.K., and over here"—I pointed to a sort of circular corral I'd formed by poking a row of sharpened twigs into the ground—"all of this is for keeping your ant *slaves*. Isn't that nice? And over here's where you milk your little aphids." On the heights above my city stood the mound of an ordinary antville. All around me the cold red earth was stitched with a black embroidery of ants. By dint of forced transport and at the cost of not a few severed abdomens and thoraxes I succeeded in getting some of the ants to follow the Imperial Formic Highway, a broad groove in the clay running out the main gates of the city, up the steep slope of the ravine, and thence out into the tremendousness of the world. With my store of snapped-off ant body parts I pearled the black eyes of El-bok the Pitiless, an ant-shaped idol molded into the apex of the pyramid. I had just begun to describe, to myself and to the ants, the complicated rites sacred to the god whose worship I was imposing on them when I heard the first screams from the playground.

"Oh, no," I said, rising to my feet. "Timothy Stokes." The girls screamed at Timothy the same way every time he

came after them—in unison and with a trill that sounded almost like delight, as if they were watching the family cat trot past with something bloody in its jaws. I scrambled up the side of the ravine and emerged as Timothy, shoulders hunched, arms outstretched, growled realistically and declared that he was hungry for the throats of puny humans. Timothy said this or something like it every time he turned into a werewolf, and I would not have been too concerned if, in the course of his last transformation, he hadn't actually gone and bitten Virginia Pease on the neck. It was common knowledge around school that Virginia's parents had since written a letter to the principal, and that the next time Timothy Stokes hurt somebody he was going to be expelled. Timothy was, in our teacher Mrs. Gladfelter's words, one strike away from an out, and there was a widespread if unarticulated hope among his classmates, their parents, and all of the teachers at Copland Fork Elementary that one day soon he would provide the authorities with the excuse they needed to pack him off to Special School. I stood there awhile, above my little city, rolling a particle of ant between my fingers, watching Timothy pursue a snarling, lupine course along the hopscotch crosses. I knew that someone ought to do something to calm him down, but I was the only person in our school who could have any reason to want to save Timothy Stokes from expulsion, and I hated him with all my heart.

"I have been cursed for three hundred years!" he declaimed. He was wearing his standard uniform of white dungarees and a plain white undershirt, even though it was a chilly afternoon in October and all the rest of us had long since been bundled up for autumn in corduroy and down. Among the odd traits of the alien race from which Timothy Stokes was popularly supposed to have sprung was an apparent imperviousness to cold; in the midst of a February snowstorm he would show up on your doorstep, replying to your mother's questions only

when she addressed him as Untivak, full of plans to build igloos and drink seal blood and chew raw blubber, wearing only the usual white jeans and T-shirt, plus a pair of giant black hip boots that must have belonged to his father—an undiscussed victim of the war in Vietnam. Timothy had just turned eleven, but he was already as tall as Mrs. Gladfelter and his bodily strength was famous; earlier that year, in the course of a two-week period during which Timothy believed himself to be an electromagnetic crane, we had on several occasions seen him swing an iron manhole cover straight up over his head.

"I have been cursed to stalk the night through all eternity," he went on, his voice orotund, carrying all across the playground. When it came to such favorite subjects as lycanthropy and rotary-wing aircraft, he used big words, and had facts and figures accurately memorized, and sounded like the Brainiac some took him for, but I knew he was not as intelligent as his serious manner and heavy black spectacles led people to believe. His grades were always among the lowest in the class. "I have been searching for prey as lovely as *you*!"

He lunged toward the nearest wall of the cage of girls around him. The girls peeled away from him as though sprayed with a hose, bumped shoulders, clung shrieking to each other's sleeves. Some of them were singing the song we sang about Timothy Stokes,

Timothy Stokes,
Timothy Stokes,
You're going to the home
for crazy folks,

and the one singing the loudest was Virginia Pease herself, in her furry black coat and her bright-red tights. She was standing screened by Sheila and Siobhan Fahey, her best friends, dangling one skinny red leg toward Timothy and then jerking it away again when Timothy swiped at it with one of his werewolf paws. Virginia had blond hair, and she was the only girl in the fifth grade with pierced ears *and* painted fingernails, and

Timothy Stokes was in love with her. I knew this because the Stokeses lived next door to us and I was privy to all kinds of secrets about Timothy that I had absolutely no desire to know. I forbade myself, with an almost religious severity, to show Timothy any kindness or regard. I would never let him sit beside me, at lunch or in class, and if he tried to talk to me on the playground I ignored him; it was bad enough that I had to live next door to him.

It was toward Virginia that Timothy now advanced, a rattling growl in his throat. She drew back behind her girlfriends, and their screaming now grew less melodious, less purely formal. Timothy crouched down on all fours. He rolled his wild white eyes and took a last look around him. That was when he saw me, halfway across the yellow distance of the soccer field. He was looking at me, I thought, as though he hoped I might have something I wanted to tell him. Instantly I dropped flat on my belly, my heart pounding the way it did when I was spotted trying to spy on a baseball game or a birthday party. I slid down into the ravine backward, doing considerable damage to the ramparts of my city, flattening one wing of the imperial palace. All through the ten minutes of growling and alarms that followed I lay there, without moving. I lay with my cheek in the dirt. At first I could hear the girls shouting for Mrs. Gladfelter, and then I heard Mrs. Gladfelter herself, sounding very angry, and then I thought I could hear the voice of Mr. Albert, the P.E. teacher, who always stepped in to break up fights when it was too late, and some bully had already knocked the glasses from your face and sent your books spinning away across the floor of the gym. Then the bell sounded the end of recess, and everything got very quiet, but I just stayed there in the ravine, at the gates of the city of the ants.

As I tried to repair the damage I had done to its walls, I told myself that I didn't feel sorry at all for stupid old Timothy Stokes, but then I would remember the confused look in his eyes as I had abandoned him to his fate, to all the unimaginable things that would be done to him in the fabulous corridors of the Special School. I kept recalling something that I had heard Timothy's mother say to mine, just a couple of days earlier. I should explain that at this point

in my childhood I had acquired the shameful habit of eavesdropping on the conversations of adults, particularly my parents, and, worse, of snooping in their drawers—a pastime or compulsion that in recent months had led me to discover nude photographs of my mother taken with my father's Polaroid; school documents and physicians' reports detailing my own learning disability, juvenile obesity, hyperactivity, and loneliness; and, most recently, a letter from my mother's attorney cheerily explaining that if my father persisted in his current pattern of violent behavior he could be restrained from coming anywhere near my mother ever again—a development for which I had on certain bad evenings prayed to God with desperation, but which, now that it had become an actual possibility, struck me as the most miraculous of all the awful wonders set loose upon the world in the course of the past year. There had been no mention in the

lawyer's letter of whether my father would be allowed to come near *me*. At any rate, I had been hanging over the bannister of the hall stairs the other morning, listening in, when Mrs. Stokes—her name was Althea—came over to retrieve a two-hundred-dollar pair of Zeiss binoculars Timothy had given me the day before in exchange for three tattered Mister Miracle comic books and a 1794 one-dollar coin that he believed to be genuine but that I knew perfectly well to have been a premium my father received several years before on subscribing to *American Heritage*.

"You know," Althea Stokes had told my mother, in that big, sad donkey voice of hers, "your little Paul is Timothy's only friend."

I DECIDED to spend the afternoon in the ravine. The sun started down behind the embankment, and the moon,



"You got a letter from MTV. They've been looking at the demographics, and they'd like you to come in for an audition."

rising early, emerged from the rooftops of the houses somebody was putting up in front of the school—brand-new split-level houses my mother and her company were having a hard time selling. The moon, I noticed, was not quite full. As I worked to rebuild the ghost town I had made, I felt keenly that my failure to help Timothy was really only the latest chapter in a lifelong history of inadequacy and powerlessness. The very last line of that letter I'd found among my mother's papers was "I think we should be able to have this thing wrapped up by November 15th." If this was true, then I had less than one month in which to effect a reconciliation between my parents—a goal that, apart from wishing for, I had done nothing at all to bring about. Now it appeared that my father would not even be *allowed* to come home anymore. My fingers grew stiff and caked with clay, and my nose ran, and I cried for a while and then stopped crying, and still it seemed that my absence from the classroom went unnoticed. I was feeling pretty sorry for myself. After a while I gave up on my city-building and just lay there on my back, gazing up at the moon. I didn't hear the scrape of footsteps until they were just above my head.

"Paul?" said Mrs. Gladfelter, leaning over the lip of the ravine, hands against her thighs. "Paul Kovel, what on earth are you doing out here?"

"Nothing," I said. "I didn't hear the bell."

"Paul," she said. "Now, listen to me. Paul, I need your help."

"With what?" I didn't think she looked angry, but her face was upside-down and it was hard to tell.

"Well, with Timothy, Paul. I guess he's just very wound up right now. You know. Well, he's pretending he's a werewolf today, and even though that's fine, and we all know how Timothy is sometimes, we have serious things to discuss with him, and we'd like him to stop pretending for just a little while."

"But what if he isn't pretending, Mrs. Gladfelter?" I said. "What if he really is a werewolf?"

"Well, maybe he is, Paul, but if you would just come inside and talk to him for a little bit, I think we might be able to persuade him to change back into Timothy. You're his friend, Paul. I asked

him if he'd like to talk to you, and he said yes."

"I'm *not* his friend, Mrs. Gladfelter. I swear to God. I can't do anything."

"Couldn't you try?"

I shook my head. I hoped that I didn't start crying again.

"Paul, Timothy is in trouble." All at once her voice grew sharp. "He needs your help, and I need your help, too. Now if you come right this minute, and get up out of that dirt, then I'll forget that you didn't come in from recess. If you don't come back inside, I'll have to speak to your mother." She held out her hand. "Now, come on, Paul. Please."

And so I took her hand, and let her pull me out of the ravine and across the deserted playground, aware that in doing so I was merely proving the unspoken corollary that my mother had left hanging, the other morning, in the air between her and Mrs. Stokes. There was a song about me, too, I'm afraid—a popular little number that went

What's that smell-o?
Paul Kovel-o
He's a big fat hippo Jell-O
He's a snoop
He smells like poop
He smells like tomato beef
Alphabet soup

because at some point in my career I had acquired the reputation, inexplicable to me, for exuding an odor of Campbell's tomato soup—a reputation that no amount of bathing or studied avoidance of all the brands and varieties of canned soup ever rid me of. As if this were not bad enough, I had to go around with a thick wad of electrician's tape on the hinge of my eyeglasses and a huge Western-style tooled-leather belt stuffed one and a half times around the loops of my trousers. It had been my father's belt, and bore his name, Marvin, stamped along its length, in big yellow capital letters set amid bright-green cacti, like a cheery frontier invitation for all to come and yank my underpants up into my



crack. I sat alone at lunch under an invisible and mysterious hood of tomato smell—a scent dangerously similar to the acrid tang of vomit—walked myself home from school, and figured in all the dramas, ceremonials, and epic struggles of my classmates only in the unlikely but mythologically requisite role of King of the Retards. Timothy Stokes, I knew, as I followed Mrs. Gladfelter down the long, silent hallway to the office, hating him more and more with each step, was *my* only friend.

He was sitting in a corner of the office, trapped in an orange vinyl armchair. There was a Roman numeral three scratched into his left cheek and his brilliant white shirt and trousers were patterned with a camouflage of grass and dirt and asphalt. His chest swelled and then subsided deeply, swelled and subsided. Mr. Buterbaugh, the principal, was standing over him, arms folded across his chest. He was watching Timothy, looking amazed and skeptical and somehow offended. Mrs. Maloney, the school secretary, who a dozen times a month typed the cruel words "tomato soup" onto the cafeteria menus that my mother cruelly affixed with a magnet to our refrigerator, rose from behind her desk when we came in, and gathered up her purse and sweater.

"I finally reached Timothy's mother, Mrs. Gladfelter," she said. "She was at work, but she said she would be here as soon as she could." She lowered her voice. "And we called Dr. Schachter, too. His office said he'd call back." She cleared her throat. "So I'm going to take my break now."

At two o'clock every day, I knew, Mrs. Maloney sneaked around to the windowless side of the school building and stood behind the power transformer, smoking an Eve cigarette. I turned, with a sinking heart, and looked at the clock over the door to Mr. Buterbaugh's office. I hadn't missed the whole afternoon, after all, lying there in the ditch for what had seemed to me like many hours. There was still another ninety minutes to be gotten through.

"Well, now, Timothy." Mrs. Gladfelter took me by the shoulders and maneuvered me around her. "Look who I found," she said.

"Hey, Timothy," I said.

Timothy didn't look up. Mrs. Glad-

felter gave me a gentle push toward him, in the small of my back.

"Why don't you sit down, Paul?"

"No." I stiffened, and pushed the other way.

"Please sit down, Paul," said Mr. Buterbaugh, showing me his teeth. Although his last name forced him to adopt a somewhat remote and disciplinarian manner with the other kids at Copland, Mr. Buterbaugh always took pains with me. He made me swap high fives with him and kept up with my grades. At first I had attributed his kindness to the fact that he was a little heavy and had probably been a fat kid, too, but then I kept hearing from my mother about how she had run into Bob Buterbaugh at this singles' bar or that party and he had said the nicest things about me. I stopped pushing against Mrs. Gladfelter and let myself be steered toward the row of orange chairs. "That's the way. Sit down and wait with Timothy until his mother gets here."

"Mr. B. and I will be sitting right inside his office, Paul."

"No!" I didn't want to be left alone with Timothy, not because I was afraid of him but because I was afraid that somebody would come into the office and see us sitting there, two matching rejects in matching orange chairs.

"That's enough now, Paul," said Mr. Buterbaugh, his friendly smile looking more false than usual. I could see that he was very angry. "Sit down."

"It's all *right*," said Mrs. Gladfelter. "You see what you can do about helping Timothy turn back into Timothy. We're just going to give you a little privacy." She followed Mr. Buterbaugh into his office and then poked her head back around the door. "I'm going to leave this door open, in case you need us. All right?"

"This much," I said, holding my hands six inches apart.

There were three chairs next to Timothy's. I took the farthest, and showed him my back, so that anyone passing by the windows of the office would not be able to conclude that he and I were engaged in any sort of conversation at all.

"Are you expelled?" I said. There was no reply. "Are you, Timothy?" Again he said nothing, and I couldn't stop myself from turning around to look at him. "Timothy, are you expelled?"

"I'm not Timothy, Professor," said

UNDER THE OLD EYES OF THE NIGHT

Torches, it was hot,
people danced, smoke drifted
like oil between their pale faces,
an old man yelled, and so on.

Among us stood the snow queen.
I knew who she was by her frail shoulders
and her wings like knives and the look
in her eyes melting like ice from within.
When she saw me, she broke
into a laugh that was warm.

No one looked while she melted.
A woman in small red boots stepped
into the puddle, and cursed. I smacked her.
I bent over and drank from the asphalt
what I suddenly loved. I tell you,

I knelt like a lover.
Before you, with your drunken face, fell over me,
sailor, this pier was a bridal bed.

—ESTHER JANSMA

(Translated, from the Dutch, by the author.)

Timothy, gravely but not without a certain air of satisfaction. He didn't look at me. "I'm afraid your precious antidote didn't work."

"Come on, Timothy," I said. "Cut it out. The moon's not even full today."

Now he turned the werewolf glint of his regard toward me. "Where were you?" he said. "I was looking for you."

"I was in the ditch."

"With the ants?"

I nodded.

"I heard you talking to them before."

"So?"

"So, are you Ant-Man?"

"No, dummy."

"Why not?"

"Because, I'm not anybody. You're not anybody, either."

We fell silent for a while and just sat there, not looking at each other, kicking at the legs of our chairs. I could hear Mrs. Gladfelter and Mr. Buterbaugh talking softly in his office; Mr. Buterbaugh called her Elizabeth. The telephone rang. A light flashed twice on Mrs. Maloney's phone, then held steady.

"Thanks for calling back, Joel," I heard Mr. Buterbaugh say. "Yes, I'm afraid so."

"I went to see Dr. Schachter a couple times," I said. "He had Micronauts and the Fembots."

"He has Stretch Armstrong, too."

"I know."

"Why did *you* go see him? Did your mother make you?"

"Yeah," I said.

"How come?"

"I don't know. She said I was having problems. With my anger, or I don't know." Actually, she had said—and at first Dr. Schachter had concurred—that I needed to learn to "manage" my anger. This was a diagnosis that I never understood, since it seemed to me that I had no problems at all managing my anger. It was my judgment that I managed it much better than my parents managed theirs, and even Dr. Schachter had to agree to that. In fact, the last time I saw him, he suggested that I try to stop managing my anger quite so well. "I don't know," I said to Timothy. "I guess I was mad about my dad and things."

"He had to go to jail."

"Just for one night."

"How come?"

"He had too much to drink," I said,

The Its



Dadgum



Consarn



Goddam



Doggone

Shunaham

with a disingenuous shrug. My father was not much of a drinker, and when he crashed the party my mother had thrown last weekend to celebrate the closing of her first really big sale, he broke a window, knocked over a chafing dish, which set fire to a batik picture of Jerusalem, and raised a bloody blue plum under my mother's right eye. People had tended to blame the unaccustomed effects of the fifth of Gilbey's that was later found in the glove compartment of his car. Only my mother and I knew that he was secretly a madman.

"Did you visit him in jail?"

"No, stupid. God! You're such a retard! You *belong* in Special School, Timothy. I hope they make you eat special food and wear a special helmet or something." I heard the distant slam of the school's front door, and then a pair of hard shoes knocking along the hall. "Here comes your retard mother," I said.

"What *kind* of special helmet?" said Timothy. It was never very easy to hurt his feelings. "Ant-Man wears a helmet."

Mrs. Stokes entered the office. She was a tall, thin woman, much older than my mother, with long gray hair and red, veiny hands. She wore clogs with white knee socks, and in the evenings after dinner she went onto her deck and smoked a pipe. Every morning she made Timothy pancakes for his breakfast, which sounded O.K. until you found out that she put things in them like carrots and leftover pieces of corn.

"Oh, hello, Paul," she said, in her Eeyore voice.

"Mrs. Stokes," said Mrs. Gladfelter, coming out of the principal's office. She smiled. "It's been kind of a long afternoon for Timothy, I'm afraid."

"How is Virginia?" said Mrs. Stokes. She still hadn't looked at Timothy.

"Oh, she'll be fine," Mr. Buterbaugh said. "Just a little shaken up. We sent her home early. Of course," he added, "her parents are going to want to speak to you."

"Of course," said Mrs. Stokes. I saw that she was still wearing her white apron and her photo nametag from her job. She worked at the bone factory out in the Huxley Industrial Park, where they made plastic skulls and skeletons for medical schools. It was her job to string together all the delicate beadwork of the hands and feet. "I'm ready to do

whatever you think would be best for Timothy."

"I'm not Timothy," said Timothy.

"Oh, please, Timmy, stop this nonsense for once."

"I'm cursed." He leaned over and brought his face very close to mine. "Tell them about the curse, Professor."

I looked at Timothy, and for the first time saw that a thin, dark down of wolfish hair had grown upon his cheek. Then I looked at Mr. Buterbaugh, and found that he was watching me with an air of earnest expectancy, as though he honestly thought there might be an eternal black-magical curse on Timothy and was more than willing to listen to anything I might have to say on the subject. I shrugged.

"Are you going to make him go to Special School?" I said.

"All right, Paul, thank you," said Mrs. Gladfelter. "You may go back to class now. We're watching a movie with Mrs. Hampt's class this afternoon."

Mrs. Maloney had reappeared in the doorway, her cheeks flushed, her lipstick fresh, smelling of cigarette.

"I'll see that he gets there," she said—uncharitably, I thought.

"See you later, Timothy," I said. He didn't answer me; he had started to growl again. As I followed Mrs. Maloney out of the office I looked back and saw Mr. Buterbaugh and Mrs. Gladfelter and poor old Mrs. Stokes standing in a hopeless circle around Timothy. I thought for a second, and then I turned back toward them and raised an imaginary rifle to my shoulder.

"This is a dart gun," I announced. Everyone looked at me, but I was talking to Timothy now. I was almost but not quite embarrassed. "It's filled with darts of my special antidote, and I made it stronger than it used to be, and it's going to work this time. And also, um, there's a tranquillizer mixed in."

Timothy looked up, and bared his teeth at me, and I took aim right between his eyes. I jerked my hands twice, and went *fwup! fwup!* Timothy's head snapped back, and his eyelids fluttered. He shook himself all over. He swallowed, once. Then he held his hands out before him, as if wondering at their hairless pallor.

"It seems to have worked," he said, his voice cool and reasonable and fine. Anyone could see he was still playing his

endless game, but all the grownups, Mr. Buterbaugh in particular, looked very pleased with both of us.

"Thank you very much, Paul." Mr. Buterbaugh gave me a pat on the head. "Remember to say hello to your mother for me."

"I'm not Paul," I said, and everybody laughed but Timothy Stokes.

WHEN I got home from school my mother was down in the basement, at my father's workbench, dressed in the paint-spattered bluejeans and hooded sweatshirt she put on whenever it was time to do dirty work. She had pulled her hair back into a tight ponytail. Normally I would have been glad to see her home from work already and dressed this way. One of the sources of friction between us, and among the various angles that I had supposedly been attempting to manage, was my dislike of the way she looked as she went off to work in the morning, in her plaid suit jackets, her tan stockings, her blouses with their little silk bow ties, her cabasset of hair-sprayed hair. In the days before she went back to work my mother had been a genuine hippie—bushy-headed, legs unshaven, dressed in vast dresses with Indian patterns; she was there to fix bowls of hot whole-grain cereal in the morning and to give me a snack of dried pineapples and milk in the kitchen when I came home. Now, every morning, I fixed myself a breakfast of cornflakes and coffee, and when I got home I generally turned on the television and ate the box of Yodels that I purchased at High's every day on my way back from school. But my pleasure at the sight of her in her old, ruined jeans, patched with a scrap of a genuine Mao jacket she had bought as a student at McGill, was diminished when I saw that she was dressed this way so that she could stand at my father's workbench and toss all the delicate furniture of his home laboratory into an assortment of battered liquor cartons.

"But Mom," I said, watching as she backhanded into a box an entire S-shaped rack of stoppered test tubes. The glass, in shattering, made a festive tinkle, as of little bells, and the dank basement air was quickly suffused with a harsh chemical stink of bananas and mold and burnt matches. "Those are his experiments."

"I know it," said my mother, looking grave, her voice filled with vandalistic glee. My father was a research chemist for the Food and Drug Administration. He was a small man with a scraggly gray beard and thick spectacles. He wore plaid sports jackets with patches on the elbows, carried his pens in a plastic pocket liner, and went to services every Saturday morning. He held a national ranking in chess (173) and a Canadian patent for a culture medium still widely used in that country, where he had been born and raised. "And he worked very hard on them all." She hefted the heavy black binder in which my father kept his lab notes and dropped it into a box that had once contained bottles of Captain Morgan rum; there was a leering picture of a pirate on the side. "For years." The laboratory notebook landed with a crunch of glass, breaking the throats of a dozen Erlenmeyer flasks beneath it. "I've asked him many, many times to come over here and pick up his things, Paulie. You know that. He's had his chance."

"I know." On his departure from our house, my father had taken only a plaid valise full of summer clothing and my grandfather's Russian chess set, whose black pieces had once been fingered by Alexander Alekhine.

"It's been months now, Paulie," my mother said. "I've got to conclude that he just doesn't want any of his stuff."

"I know," I said.

She surveyed the wreckage of my father's home laboratory—a little ruefully now, I thought—and then looked at me. "I guess it must seem to you like I'm being kind of mean," she said. "Eh?"

I didn't say anything. She held out her hand to me. I grabbed it and tugged her to her feet. She lifted the Captain Morgan carton and stacked it atop a Smirnoff carton filled with commercially prepared reagents in their bottles and jars; there was a further crunch of glass as the upper box settled into the lower. She hoisted the stacked boxes to her hip and jogged them once to get a better grip. One carton remained on the floor beside the workbench. We both looked at it.

"I'll come back for that one," my mother said, after a pause. She turned, and started slowly up the stairs.

For a minute I stood there with my

hands jammed into my pockets, staring down into the box at my father's crucible tongs, at his coils of clear plastic tubing, at his stirrers, pipettes, and stopcocks wrapped like taffy in stiff white paper. I knelt down and wrapped my arms around the carton and lowered my face into it and inhaled a clean, rubbery smell like that of a new Band-Aid. Then I lifted the carton and carried it upstairs, through the laundry room, and out into the garage, trying to fight off an unsettling feeling that I was throwing my father away. The rear hatch of our Datsun was raised, and the back seats had been folded forward.

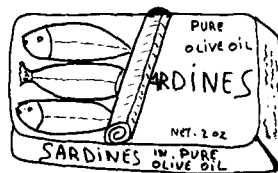
"Thank you, sweetie," said my mother, gently, as I handed her the last carton. "Now I just have to load up a few more things, and then I'm going to run all this stuff over to Mr. Kappelman's office." Mr. Kappelman was my father's lawyer; my mother's lawyer was a woman she called Deirdre. "You can just stay here, O.K.? You don't have to help me anymore."

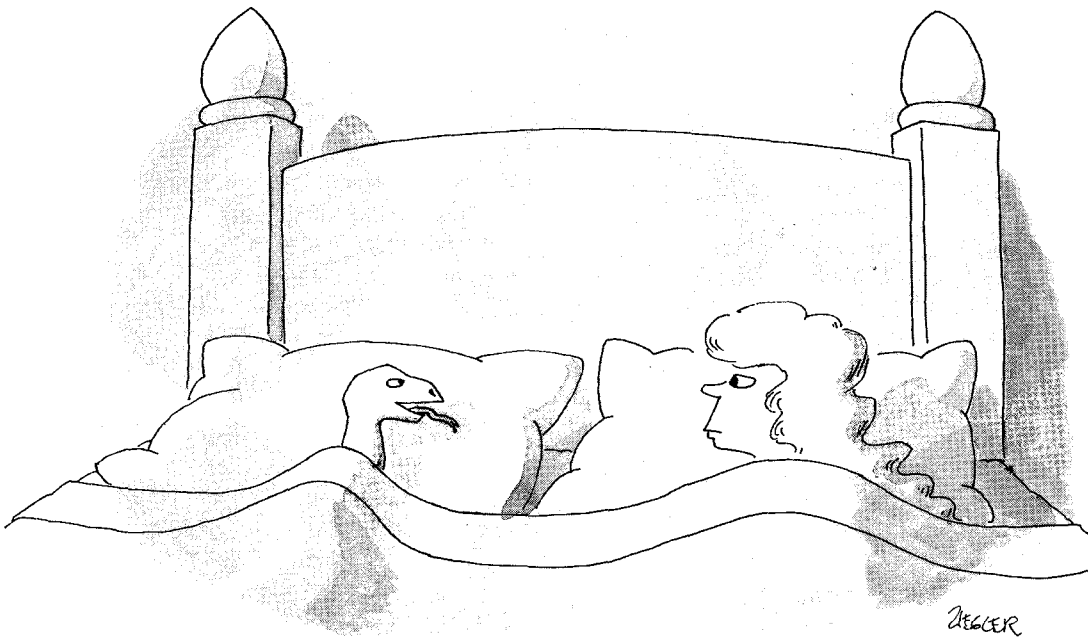
"There's no room for me anyway," I said.

Most of the space in the car was already taken up by packed liquor boxes. I could see the fuzzy sleeve of my father's green angora sweater poking out of one carton, and, through the finger holes in the side of another, I could make out the cracked black spines of his college chemistry texts. Stuffed into the spaces among the boxes and into odd nooks of the car's interior were my father's bicycle helmet, his clarinet case, his

bust of Paul Morphy, his brass wall barometer, his shoeshine kit, his vaporizer, the panama hat he liked to wear at the beach, the beige plastic bedpan

that had come home from the hospital with him after his deviated-septum operation and now held all his razors and combs and the panoply of gleaming instruments he employed to trim the hair that grew from the various features of his face, a grocery bag full of his shoetrees, the Montreal Junior Chess Championship trophy he had won in 1953, his tie rack, his earmuffs, and one Earth shoe. There was barely enough room left in the car for the three boxes my mother and I had dragged up from the basement. I helped her squeeze them into place, audibly doing more damage to





"I thought that while he's in there brushing his teeth it would be a good opportunity for us to talk."

their rank-smelling contents, and then my mother put her hands on the edge of the hatch and got ready to slam it.

She said, "Stand clear." I flinched. I guess I must have shut my eyes; after a second or two I realized that she hadn't closed the door yet, and when I looked at her again her eyes were scanning my face, darting very quickly back and forth, the way they did when she thought I might have a fever.

"Paul," she said, "how was school today?"

"Fine."

"How's your asthma?"

"Good."

She took her hands off the lip of the hatch and crouched down in front of me. Her face, I saw, was still buried under the thick layer of beige frosting that she applied to it every morning.

"Paul," she said. "What's the matter, honey?"

"Nothing," I said, turning from her unrecognizable face. "I'll be right back." I started away from her.

"Paul—" She took hold of my arm.

"I have to go to the *bathroom*!" I said, twisting free of her. "You look ugly," I added as I ran back into the house.

I went to the telephone and dialled my father's number at work. The departmental secretary said that he was down the hall. I said that I would wait. I

carried the phone over to the couch, where I had thrown my parka, and took my daily box of Yodels from its hiding place inside the torn orange lining. By the time my father took me off hold I had eaten three of them. This didn't require all that much time, to be honest.

"Dr. Kovel," said my father as he came clattering onto the line.

"Dad?"

"Paul. Where are you?"

"Dad, I'm at home. Guess what, Dad? I got expelled from school today."

"What? What's this?"

"Yeah, um, I got really mad, and I thought I was a werewolf, and I, um, I bit this girl, you know—Virginia Pease? On the neck. I didn't break the skin, though," I added. "And so they expelled me. Can you come over?"

"Paul, I'm at work."

"I know."

"What is all this?" His breath blew heavy through the line and made an irritated rattle in the receiver at my ear. "All right, listen, I'll be there as soon as I can get away, eh?" Now his voice grew thick, as though on the other end of the line, while he held the receiver in the middle of his blank little office in Rockville, Maryland, his face had gone red with embarrassment. "Is your mother there?"

I told him to hold on, and went back out to the garage.

"Mom," I said, "Dad's on the phone." I said these words in a voice so normal and cheerful that it hurt my heart to hear them. "He wants to talk to you." I smiled the conspiratorial little smile I had so often seen her use on her clients as she hinted that the seller just might be willing to come down. "I think he wants to apologize."

"Did you *call* him?"

"Oh, uh, yeah. Yes. I had to," I said, remembering my story. "Because I got expelled from school. I have to go to Special School now. Starting tomorrow, probably."

My mother put down the hoc she had been trying to squeeze into the

back of her car and went, rather unwillingly, I thought, to the phone. Before she stepped into the house she looked back at me with a doubtful smile. I looked away. I stood there, behind her car, gazing in at all my father's belongings. My mother had said that she planned to take them over to his lawyer's office, but I didn't believe her. I believed that she meant to take them to the dump. I hesitated for an instant, then reached in for my father's laboratory notebook. He had always been more than willing to show me parts of it, whenever I asked him to; and naturally I had taken many furtive looks at its innermost pages when he wasn't around. But I had never really comprehended its contents, nor the tenor of the experiments he'd been performing down there in our basement over the years, although I had a general sense of disappointment about them, as I did about his whole interest, professional and avocational, in the chemistry of mildews and molds. Yet even if there was nothing of interest in his notes—a likelihood that I still could not fully accept—I nonetheless felt a sudden urge to possess the notebook itself. Perhaps someday I would be able to decipher its cryptic formulae and crabbed script, and thence derive all manner of marvellous pastes of invisibility and mind-control dusts, unheard-of

vitamins and deadly fungal poisons and powders that repelled gravity. I reached for the notebook and then decided also to take two of the boxes of laboratory equipment. I knew who would keep them safe for me; I hoped, as I never had before, that he would still want to be my friend.

I peered around the side of the garage, to make sure that my mother wasn't watching from the front windows, then ran as quickly as I could toward the stand of young maples and prickly bushes that separated us from the Stokeses. The boxes were very heavy, and the shards of glass within them jingled like change. It was dinnertime, and nearly dark, but none of the lights were on in Timothy's house. I supposed that he had been taken to see Dr. Schachter, and all at once I worried that he would never come home again, that they would just send Timothy straight off to Special School that day. Some people claimed that the little yellow van that sometimes passed us when we were on our way to school in the morning, its windows filled with the blank, cheerful faces of strange boys none of us knew, was the daily bus to Special School; but other people said that you had to go live there forever, like reform school or prison, and get visits from your parents on the weekends.

My mother was calling me. "Paul—aul!" she cried. She was one of those women who have a hard time raising their voices; it always came out sounding hoarse and friendless whenever she called me home. "Paul—lie!"

I hid in the brambles and studied the dark face of Timothy's house, trying to decide what to do with my father's things. My arms were growing tired, and I needed to go to the bathroom, and for now, I decided, I would leave the boxes at the basement door. I would come back later to ask Timothy, who on occasion appeared in the avatar of the faithful robot from "Lost in Space," to guard them for me. Timothy slept in the basement of the Stokeses' house, under a wall hung from floor to ceiling

with his vast arsenal of toy swords and firearms, in a room strewn with dismembered telephones and the bones of imitation skeletons. I tiptoed around the side of the Stokeses' house and into their weedy back yard. The moon was high and brilliant in the sky by now, and I thought that, after all, it was pretty nearly full. I approached the basement door, keeping an uneasy eye on the shadows in the trees, and the shadows under the Stokeses' deck, and the shadows gathered on the swings of the creaking jungle gym. Since my last visit, I saw, Timothy had marked the entrance to his labyrinth with two neat pyramids of plastic skulls. My mother's raspy voice fell silent, and there was only the sound of cars out on the country road, and the ghostly squeak of the swing set and the forlorn crooning of a blind Dalmatian that lived at the bottom of our street. Carelessly I dropped the boxes on the step, between the grinning pyramids, and ran back through the trees toward my house, heart pounding, tearing my clothes on the teeth of the underbrush, certain that something quick and terrible was following me every step of the way.

"I'm home!" I said, coming into the brightness and warmth of our hall. "Here I am."

"There you are," said my mother, though she didn't look all that happy to see me. She laid a heavy hand on my

shoulder. It smelled of butyric acid and dextrorotatory sucrose and also very faintly of Canoe. "I just got off the phone with Bob Buterbaugh, Paul. He told me what really happened at school today." She had yanked her hair free of its ponytail and now it shot out in ragged arcs around her head, tangled like the vanes of a wrecked umbrella. "Do you want to explain yourself to me? Why did you lie?"

"Is Dad coming over?"

"Well, yes, he is, Paul—"

"Great."

"—because he feels that he really needs to see you, tonight. But the two of you will have to sit outside in the car and talk, or go somewhere else. I'm not going to let him in the house."

I was astonished. "Why not?"

"Because, Paul, your dad—you know as well as I do—he's become, well, you know how he's been lately. I don't have to tell you." As if she were angry, she folded her arms, and clenched her jaw. But I could see that she was trying to keep herself from crying. "I have to set some limits."

"You mean he can't come over to our house anymore? Ever again?"

There were tears in her eyes. "Ever again," she said. Once more she crouched before me, and I let her take me in her arms, but I did not return her embrace. In the picture window at the



"That's Laura's Susanne Bartsch imitation. I guess it's time for us to go."

end of the hall I watched her reflection hugging mine. I didn't want to be comforted on the impending loss of my father. I wanted him not to be lost, and it seemed to me that it would be her fault if he was.

"He said he's going to collect his things. So I guess it's a good thing I didn't get rid of them, eh?" She gave me a poke in the ribs. "He must want them after all. Hey," she said. "What is it? What's the matter?" She followed my gaze toward the picture window, where our embracing reflections looked back at us with startled expressions.

"Nothing," I said. A light had just come on in the Stokeses' house. "I—I have to go over to Timothy's. I left something there."

"What?"

"My Luger," I said, remembering a toy I had lent to Timothy sometime last summer. "The pink one that squirts."

"Well, it's time to eat," said my mother. "You can go after."

"But what if Dad comes?"

"Well, what if he does? You can go over to Timothy's tomorrow. He's probably not allowed to see anyone anyway."

IN five minutes I bolted my dinner—one of those bizarre conglomerations of bottled tomato sauces, casseroles-in-boxes, and leftover Chinese lunches that were then the national dishes of our disordered and temporizing homeland—and ran out the front door into the night. I was sure that Timothy had found the cartons by now. What if he thought I had meant them for a present and refused to give them back? My father was going to be angry enough about my mother's treatment of his chemistry things, but it would be worse when he found out that most of them, including his notebook, were missing. I sprinted across our yard as quickly as I could, considering my asthma, and went crashing through the maple trees toward the Stokeses' house. There was a burst of red light as a thin branch slapped against my left eye, and I cried out, and covered my face, and ran headlong into Timothy Stokes. My chin struck his chest and I sat down hard.

He smiled, and knelt beside me. "Are you all right, Professor?" he said. He was

wearing the same pair of white jeans and stained T-shirt, under an unbuttoned jacket that was too large for him and that bore over the breast pocket his own last name, printed in block letters on a strip of cloth. He pulled a flashlight from his pocket and switched it on. The beam threw eerie shadows across his cheeks and forehead, and his little brown eyes were alight behind his glasses. I saw at once that the antidote I'd administered to him that afternoon had worn off, and he showed no sign of having been subjected to any weird therapies or electroshock helmets. His face looked as solemn and stupid as ever. He wore a rifle strapped across his back and a plastic commando knife in his boot, and three Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos hand grenades poked through the web belt of his canteen, and in his right hand he was carrying, as though it were another weapon, the thick, black, case-bound notebook.

"That's my father's," I said. "You can't have it."

"I already photographed all of its contents with my spy camera," he explained. "I have every page on microfilm. Plus I ran an extensive computer analysis on them." He lowered his voice. "Your father is a very dangerous man. Look here." He opened the notebook and shone the flashlight on a page where my father had written, "Myco. K. P889, L. 443, Tr. 23," and then a date from three years earlier. The rest of the page was an illegible mishmash of numbers and ab-



brevisions, some of them connected by sharp forceful arrows. The entry went on for several pages in the same fashion, cramped by haste and marginalia. I had seen plenty like it before, and I had no doubt that it described a process that could

be used to get rid of something that grew between the tiles of your bathroom, or on the skin of your pears.

"Did you see?" said Timothy.

"See what?" I said.

"Your father is Ant-Man," he said gravely. "I've suspected it for a long time." He unhooked the canteen from his belt. It was covered in green canvas and it sloshed as he waved it around. "This is the antidote."

He clamped the notebook under one arm and with his freed hand unscrewed

the cap. I inclined my face slightly toward the mouth of the canteen, extended my fingers, and wafted the air above it toward my nostrils, delicately, as my father had shown me. I detected no odor this way, however. So he stuck it right under my nose.

"It smells like Coke," I said. "You put salt in it." Timothy didn't say anything, but I thought I saw disappointment flicker across his flashlit face. "What would happen if I drank it?" I added quickly, not wanting to let him down. There was something about the way Timothy played his game, the thoroughness with which he imagined, that never failed to entrance me.

"That's what I'd like to know," said Timothy. "What if it said in this book, here, that your father has been giving you the secret formula to drink, like one drop at a time in your cereal, ever since you were a little baby? And what if that's why you can talk to ants, too?"

"What if," I said. I had always felt sorry for Ant-Man, a superhero whose powers condemned him to the disappointing comradeship of bugs. "Timothy, what happened to you today? What did they say? Are you expelled?"

"Shh," said Timothy. The notebook went flapping to the ground as he reached for me, and drew me to him, and covered my mouth with his hand. His voice fell to a harsh whisper. "Someone's coming."

I heard the sound of a car climbing the hill. A pair of headlights splashed light across the front of my house. I yanked my head free of his grasp.

"It's my dad!" I said. "Timothy, I need to get his stuff back—now!"

"Quiet." Timothy loosened his hold on me and brought the canteen up to my lips. I took a step away from him. "Quick," he said. "Swallow this antidote. We don't have time to test it. You'll just have to take the risk." He patted the dull black barrel of his rifle. "I've already loaded this baby with antidote darts."

From the distant front porch of our house I could hear our front door squeal on its hinges, and then the separate voices of my parents, saying hello. I tried to make sense of their murmurings, but we were too far away. After a while there was another long squeal of hinges, and the door slammed shut, and then our house creaked and resounded with the passage of feet along its hallway.

"Oh, my God," I said. "I think she let him go inside."

"Come on," said Timothy. "Drink this."

"I'm not drinking that stuff," I said.

"All right, then," he said. "I'll drink it." He threw back his head and took a long swallow. Then he handed the canteen to me, and I drank down the rest of the antidote. It was sweet and sharp-tasting, and bitter through and through. I felt pretty sure that it was just Coca-Cola mixed with good old sodium chloride, but then, after I got it down, I realized there must have been something else mixed into it—something that burned.

"Take this," he said, handing me the plastic commando knife. He said that it was in case something went wrong; the rifle was only for delivering the antidote. He said, "Stay down."

He led me out of the trees, across our moonlit back yard, and up the short, grassy slope that rose to the back of our house—a silvery-gray shape loping along in a sort of crouched-over commando half-trot. The sleeves of my parka whispered against my side as I ran. I belched up a fiery blast of his formula, and then laughed a tipsy little laugh. Timothy stepped up onto our patio and unslung the rifle from his shoulder. A radiant cloud of light from our living room came pouring out through the sliding-glass door, illuminating the trees and the lawn chairs and the grill, and the crown of Timothy's close-cropped head as he knelt down, raised the rifle, and waited for me to catch up to him. When I got there he was peering in, his face looking blank and amazed behind the luminous disks of his spectacles, his breath coming regular and heavy.

"Can you feel it?" I said, kneeling beside him. "Is it working?"

He didn't say anything. I looked. My father and my mother were sitting on the sofa. He was holding her in his arms. Her face was red and streaked with tears, and her mouth was fastened against his. Her sweatshirt was hiked up around her throat, and one of her breasts hung loose and shaking and astonishingly white. The other breast my father held, roughly, in his hairy hand, as if he were trying to crush it.

"What are they doing?" Timothy whispered. He set the rifle down on the patio. "Are those your parents?"

I tried to think of something to say. I



was dizzy with surprise, and the formula we had swallowed was making me feel like I was going to be sick. I sat there for a minute or so beside Timothy, watching the struggle of those two people, who had been transformed forever by a real and powerful curse, the very least of whose magical effects was me. I felt as though I had been spying on them for my entire life, to no profit at all. After a moment I had to look away. Timothy's gun was lying on the ground beside me. I reached for it, and held it in my grip, and found that it weighed far more than I had expected. Its breechblock was steely and cool.

"Timothy, is this real?" I said, but I knew he would never be able to answer me.

I stood up, my head spinning, and stumbled off the patio, onto the frost-bright grass. Timothy lingered for a moment longer, then came hurtling away from the window, passing me on our way into the woods. Under the maple trees we threw up whatever it was that he had given us to drink. He

seemed to lose some of his enthusiasm for our game after that, and when I told him to go home and leave me alone he did.

LATER on that night, my father and I fetched his notebook from the pile of dead leaves in the woods where Timothy had dropped it, and went over together to the Stokeses' house to retrieve all the pieces of his shattered laboratory. My father's arm lay heavy around my neck. I told Althea Stokes about the rifle, and Timothy was forced to produce it and surrender it to her. It had been, she said, his father's. I helped my father carry the cartons out to his car, and then in silence we and my mother removed all of his other belongings, one by one, from her hatchback, and loaded them into the trunk of our big old Chevrolet Impala. Then my father drove away.

The next morning at eight, a little yellow bus full of unknown boys pulled up in front of the Stokeses' house, and sounded its angry horn, and Timothy went out to meet it. ♦

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THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE

BY ADAM GOPNIK

IN America, retired politicians hire other people to write their memoirs for them; in England, retired politicians have to write the memoirs themselves. Though this cuts down on work for free-lance writers, it means that on occasion English political memoirs actually have a chance of being well written; and, in fact, a succession of first-class political autobiographies from both sides of the Parliamentary aisle has been published in London in the past few years. Of these books, which include memoirs by Labour's Denis Healey and the Conservatives' Nigel Lawson, the most highly praised has been Roy Jenkins' "A Life at the Center" (Random House; \$30). The *Sunday Times* called it "the best political autobiography of the post-war era."

Jenkins' name is not likely to be instantly familiar even to politically aware Americans (though he is, among other things, a professional author, with fifteen previous books to his credit, a few of them published in this country). He was a leading member of the self-confident generation of Labour Party politicians who came to power in the early sixties—a time when Labour seemed likely to be running things for the rest of the century—and dominated the country's politics until the age of Thatcher began, in 1979. A Member of Parliament for over

thirty years, he served in both of Harold Wilson's governments: from 1965 to 1967 as Home Secretary—the rough equivalent of our Attorney General and the Secretary of HUD—and from 1967 to 1969 as Chancellor of the Exchequer; and then, from 1974 to 1976, as Home Secretary once again. Jenkins is probably



In his memoirs, Roy Jenkins, a founder of the Social Democratic Party, demonstrates how a British politician may go down in defeat and still come up smiling.

best known, though, as a founder and first leader of the Social Democratic Party, a centrist gathering of ex-Labourites that seemed in the early eighties to be the last, best hope of mid-twentieth-century liberalism—the famous "third way," the dreamed-of marriage of Jeffersonian individualism and Socialist communitarianism, which haunted the left-leaning imagination from the death of Lenin to the end of the Cold War.

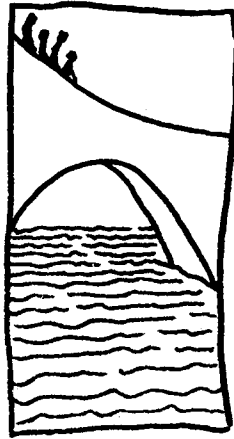
Still, it's a little surprising that Jenkins should write the most authoritative autobiography of his generation in English politics, since, seen from the terraces, he never seemed the most commanding figure. Of Jenkins' crowd, Healey was the one with the wit and the eyebrows, while James Callaghan was the big, scary one, and Tony Crosland the persnickety intellectual. Jenkins seemed, by comparison, a mild man—the one who always had liberal doubts, and a hard time pronouncing his "r"s. As it happens, the praise his book has won in England is due in part to its extended, achieved mildness—to its detail, its narrative flow, its good-humored and fair-minded tone—and to Jenkins' ability to lend to dusty issues of government the pace and comedy of recognizably human events. This means, however, that for an American audience the virtues of his book are in a way inseparable from its limitations: Jenkins excels in the detailed, novelistic narration of events that Americans have never cared about, illuminated by a grasp of the psychology of people whom Americans have never heard of. Even

the most dogged reader here is not likely to be stirred much one way or another by his four-page account of the role of Barbara Castle's industrial-relations bill in the wage-inflation crisis of late 1969.

What makes Jenkins' book entertaining, though, even to those who are neither fans nor students of Labour Party squabbles, is that it's a political memoir that's actually about *politics*—and politics, one feels, as they are practiced in the world. One need only have worked in an office for two weeks to recognize and enjoy the basic, Trollopian truth of the intrigues that Jenkins sketches: the way long-dreaded confrontations bizarrely wind down in irrelevant digressions, only to be resolved the next day in a stray phone call; how before an important meeting everyone worries about controlling the agenda, although no one in an important meeting has ever actually followed an agenda; the way the bitterest fights in life are between allies who are agreed on everything save some small side issue, which drives them into a state of outright loathing; and the way a party whose members are united on all points except a single, relatively trivial one will return to the trivial point again and again, and usually in the most public way, until it ends by destroying their comradeship. And no other book has drawn so sharply, or so well, and from lived experience rather than from abstract deduction, the fundamental differences between the culture of politics in Britain and the culture of politics in this country. Nor has any other book made so plain why the liberal dream of finding the center is almost always doomed to fail.

"A Life at the Center" is also a pleasure to read because it is the book, or has been devised so as to seem the book, of a happy—or, at least, a contented—man. This is in itself something to ponder, since Jenkins is, by the brutal standards of American politics, a failure, and a failure twice over. As a member of successive Labour governments, he presided over a period in which Britain moved, he says, "from being one of the richest to being amongst the poorest of the European countries"; his own most important

work, as Chancellor of the Exchequer during the devaluation of the pound and the subsequent austerity budgets of the late sixties, was to keep the national retreat from becoming an anarchic rout. The solution that he proposed to stem that retreat—the S.D.P.—ignominiously collapsed scarcely seven years after it was begun, and never got anywhere near power. In American terms, it would be as if a politician who combined



Michael Dukakis's charisma, John Anderson's judgment, and Jimmy Carter's luck sat down to write his memoir. One of the first things that Jenkins' book accomplishes, simply through its wry and generous tone, is to remind the reader how badly American politics have been disfigured by the terror that Americans feel at the idea of even the most honorable setback: we

act as though losing an election were not an honorable necessity of democratic life but a public manifestation of inner worthlessness, to be atoned for only by lengthy penance. There is not even a touch of apologia in Jenkins' book; in fact, nobody reading it would think that Jenkins' life had not been one to envy.

For one thing, there's the food. Harold Wilson once said, a little meanly, of Jenkins that he was an excellent Chancellor until seven o'clock. Wilson didn't mean what that formula usually implies—that seven o'clock was when Jenkins started to drink. He meant that seven was when Jenkins started to eat. Throughout his memoir, Jenkins gives new meaning to the term "social democrat." He is high-heartedly companionable in an almost eighteenth-century way; the dinner party is the unit of measure by which his book progresses. In one typical passage, Jenkins recalls a political crisis in the late fifties, when Hugh Gaitskell was the Labour leader. "Gaitskell intended to strike while the iron was hot in an attempt to reform the Labour party, and wanted to have the members of his praetorian guard around," Jenkins writes. Jenkins cancels a long-planned trip to America and gets to work: "In the two weeks following the election, apart from the Wyatt dinner already mentioned, we

dined with the Daltons, the Jays, and the Cronins (he being then Labour MP for Loughborough), as well as the Benns, and we had Crosland, the Healeys, the Gordon Walkers, the Mayhews, and the Denis Howells to dine with us." Gaitskell got his way.

Jenkins' taste for dinner parties has been rather snobbishly mocked by some of his British critics: as a miner's son, the story runs, Jenkins was unduly impressed by the social life of the upper middle classes. But Jenkins' book makes clear that his sense of the political life as a form of institutionalized gregariousness, far from being a measure of the distance he travelled from his background, was one of the things he absorbed most deeply from his father. Arthur Jenkins, who is one of the book's two heroes, went into the mines in Varteg, in Monmouthshire, in 1894, at the age of twelve, and, with "a significant break from 1908 to 1910," remained a miner for twenty-four years. Roy Jenkins writes that his father "loathed every day underground." Little wonder: on the day of his son Roy's birth, in 1920, the *Times* carried an item "announcing that 1919 had been a very good year for mining casualties"—that "only 1,229 colliers had been killed." Jenkins' father had joined the miners' union, and in 1908 he won a union-sponsored scholarship to Ruskin College, Oxford. He even managed to travel to Paris during the heyday of Jaurès and the French Socialists. He learned French and came to love Paris. Then he went back to the mines. "The shock, physical and cultural, of going back to the pit at the end of 1910 must have been shattering," his son writes. The younger Jenkins came to think harshly of the British trade-union movement, but he always remembered that for his father the union had been the only vehicle between a life not very different from that of a Roman slave and the life of a modern human being.

By the time he was a young man, Arthur Jenkins had become a full-time union organizer. (He went to prison in a picketing dispute in 1926—a fact that was kept from his son for a very long time.) In 1935, he became the M.P. for Pontypool. He and his wife were endlessly sociable, and they introduced their son to every important left-wing politician and journalist of the period, from Clement Attlee to Richard

Crossman. By the age of fifteen, Roy Jenkins had begun to visit the House of Commons, and he recalls staying up "all one February night through a Labour filibuster on the Unemployment Assistance Regulations of 1936."

Any teen-ager who can stay up and listen to M.P.s talk at even greater length than necessary about the Unemployment Assistance Regulations is made for political life. But Jenkins got there the long way around. He was accepted, through an examination, to Balliol—then the only Oxford men's college with competitive entry for commoners. Before he went up, his father insisted on his spending a month in Paris, in the Thirteenth Arrondissement, which was then still "an encapsulation of Third Republican Paris." Jenkins' Europhilia wasn't acquired in the plush sixties but inherited from the hard thirties: cosmopolitan internationalism was something he learned from his coal-miner father.

After Balliol came the war. Jenkins enlisted in the Army and ended up at Bletchley Park, the chief British decoding center and site of the Ultra project, where the war may well have been won. Jenkins became a "breaker"—one of the superior class of decoders, who deciphered intercepted German messages. The experience seems to have given him—as the experiences of so many of his generation elsewhere in the armed forces did—a basic, uncritical respect for the notion that even big, hopelessly inefficient government projects might in the long run work. He also spent the Army period reading "the whole of Jane Austen and Proust, most of Trollope, Hardy, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy." And most of Woolf and Waugh.

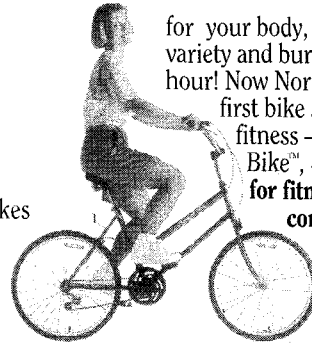
Then, in 1950, Jenkins became a Member of Parliament himself (his father had died in 1946), representing the Birmingham constituency of Stechford. Although Labour was in and out of power in the fifties, the Party—like the Democrats here or the Liberals in Canada—saw itself at every moment as what used to be called the "natural party of governance"; the most the Tories could do was slow down, temper, or act as a drag on Labour's march onward and upward. The future would be determined by the direction that the Labour Party took. In that struggle, Jenkins became a disciple of the moder-

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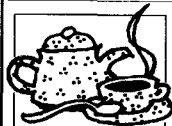
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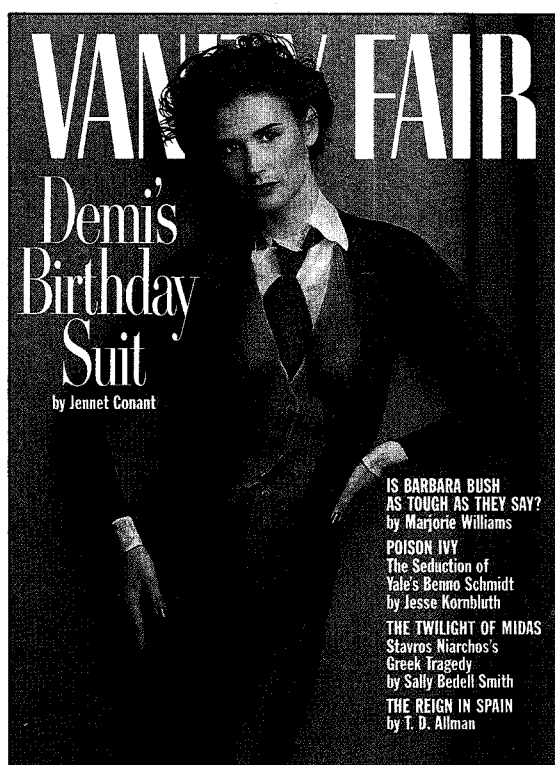
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ate Labourite Hugh Gaitskell, who is the second hero of the book. Gaitskell, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Attlee government of the early fifties, was a figure who inspired the same kind of affectionate respect that Adlai Stevenson won in this country. (They were also almost equally unlucky as politicians.) Jenkins wrote a series of essays that spelled out, sometimes in advance of the senior leader, what "Gaitskellite" politics might look like. A Gaitskellite, he writes, "treated nationalization as a secondary question, unimportant for its own sake, although probably a necessary concomitant of a further advance to equality." For Jenkins, the essence of Gaitskellite politics was that you could have no very strong feelings one way or the other about public ownership and still have a passionate belief in public management—a belief that government could act as a referee, arbiter, and broker between competing private interests, meanwhile gently nudging the country toward perfect equality. Such a position defines the far left of the American Democratic Party—it is as left as Americans ever get—but, given the existence of an alternative, insular, millennial socialist tradition in Britain (a millenarianism fuelled by an understandable desire to even the score of a millennium of real oppression), to many of his contemporaries Gaitskellism as Jenkins defined it looked not very different from old-fashioned Whiggism as, say, Asquith had defined it. Most of Jenkins' political life over the next twenty years turned on the struggle between these two visions of socialism—one pragmatic and international, the other romantic and inward-looking. The battles that consumed most of Jenkins' life were therefore all fought within the Labour Party. The Tories appear in his book only as lispng wraiths who flutter over from the other side and fill in for a bit when Labourites are too busy squabbling.

hold on to a government that is rightfully theirs. (The Tories emerge, in effect, as a series of substitute teachers, filling in until Labour recovers; it is one of the shocks of the book when Mrs. Thatcher turns out to be not a substitute teacher but a schoolmistress to end all schoolmistresses.)

In 1963, Gaitskell died suddenly, and Harold Wilson defeated Jenkins' choice for successor, George Brown, in the

leadership contest. The following year, after Labour won a general election, Jenkins joined the Wilson government as a representative of the surviving Gaitskellites. (Jenkins frequently points out the degree to which leaders are straitjacketed by perceived necessities to include in their inner circle men and women who they know perfectly well are waiting only for them to turn their backs before plunging a knife in.) In the first Wilson government, which lasted until 1970, Jenkins, after serving as Minister of Aviation, became Home Secretary. He ended censorship of the theatre, liberalized abortion law, helped eliminate homosexuality. This was, in retrospect, the last reaping of the Enlightenment, and, prophetically, depended on cross-party support rather than on Labour Party discipline.

Then, in November of 1967, the pound collapsed; James Callaghan, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, resigned; and Wilson offered Jenkins the job. Why Wilson chose to give that post—by tradition, the second or third most important in government—to Jenkins, who had no experience in finance and was almost openly working to supplant him as leader, is well analyzed, in its mixture of dumb, intuitive motives and rational, even Machiavellian, calculation, by Jenkins himself. The analysis is worth quoting extensively, not because it's a particularly glittering or self-conscious passage but because it illustrates the candor that gives Jenkins' book its appealingly worldly flavor:

Crosland [the other candidate for the job] was cleverer than I was and substantially more skilled in economics. But Wilson could never get on with him. Perhaps oddly, Wilson and I, when not locked in a dispute which made him suspicious, could get on. We liked talking to each other about minutiae which Crosland regarded as puerile: railway timetables or who had held which political office for exactly how long in nineteenth- or early twentieth-century governments. More important, however, was Wilson's belief... that I had a command over the House of Commons that eluded Crosland... The disadvantage of Crosland's impressively ratiocinative progress towards a view was that when three days had gone by, the issue had often resolved itself. He had not so much taken a more rational decision as lost the opportunity to take one at all. In any event, I believe that Wilson's perception of this difference was a factor.

My surmise is that when he first had Callaghan's impending resignation on his plate, he recoiled from the prospect of me,

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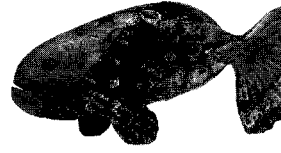
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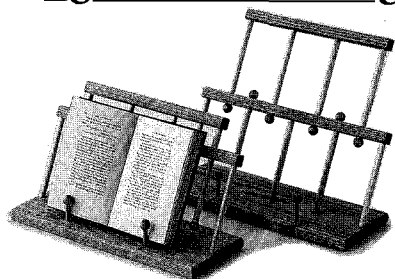
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whose relatively good press he had come to find an irritation and whom he regarded as his most dangerous rival because of the support I had amongst the Labour MP's who were critical of his leadership. . . . The best hope for safety and stability was that he and I should be bound together, if not by hoops of steel, at least by bonds of mutual self-interest.

So, at the age of forty-seven, there opened before me, not exactly a smiling and golden prospect but one of the great opportunities of my life.

To which could be added—Jenkins later adds as much himself—that, since the new Chancellor was as likely to fail as to succeed, Wilson would in the end either have rebounded from a disaster or dispatched his nearest rival.

Jenkins was, by his own account and everybody else's, a very good Chancellor, who sold the country on a series of taxes and budget cuts. All this while, he was writing: biographies of Arthur Balfour and Sir Charles Dilke and Herbert Asquith; book reviews and long journalistic pieces for the *Observer*. Jenkins is a real writer, too (he remembers every bad review, and every fan letter from another writer), so, although the struggle for the soul of the Labour Party is the manifest story of his book, its latent theme is the near relationship in British life of the literary and the political élites. At the height of his political ascendancy, Jenkins not only sat down to dinner with writers and intellectuals (as opposed to professional pundits and power brokers with typewriters) but thought it natural, and even necessary, to keep up a literary front. Granted that Jenkins is exceptional even by British standards—and granted, too, that British standards have changed a lot since—it is still hard for an American reader not to pinch himself as, reading Jenkins' book, he recalls that the author who is evaluating Proust or reconsidering Harold Nicolson is in the political position of a Lloyd Bentsen or a Walter Mondale.

The point is not that this was normal in England but that it would be almost impossible here. It's not that American politicians aren't well educated—if anything, they tend, as Bill Clinton has shown, to be much more technically expert than their British counterparts are. (One is a little shocked to see Jenkins, who basically knew no more economics than a subscriber to *The Economist*, casually made Chancellor of the Exchequer.) But the expertise is narrow: even in our

élite colleges, ambitious political-minded people and ambitious literary people are separated, if not at birth, then at least at sophomore year. The real problem is not so much that the system doesn't give you literate politicians as that it guarantees that we will forever have cloistered intellectuals. The natural back and forth between the life of the mind and the life of the world which is the prerequisite for a genuinely cosmopolitan culture is difficult to sustain here. (The situation isn't helped, of course, by the separation of the literary and the political capitals.) And the result is that when our professors attempt to engage the world they end up either embracing the most mechanical, unreal, and Ptolemaic systems of politics—Marxism lives only on American college campuses—or else inhabiting that netherworld of policy institutes and think tanks, and lose the dignity and independence of real scholarly life.

In the 1970 elections, Jenkins' austerity budgets, admired but not loved, were part of the reason that Labour lost. Jenkins wasn't heartbroken, since it was assumed that the loss amounted to no more than a necessary breather between Labour governments—and, possibly, a necessary preliminary to a Jenkins government. At that point, the overriding issue for Jenkins became Europe. The Labour Party, after being staunchly European, had become anti-European. Wilson himself, in what Jenkins regards as a real betrayal of principle, turned on Europe, too. Jenkins at first fought hard against holding a referendum on Britain's entry into Europe, on the ground that it undermined Parliamentary authority (and also because it seemed sure to lose). But when it became clear that the vote was going to happen anyway, he took the lead, and was made president of a cross-party umbrella organization to lead the "yes" side; under Jenkins, it won big.

In retrospect, the referendum campaign was one of the high-water marks of Jenkins' career. It was a dangerous victory, though, because it gave Jenkins—who felt far more at home with sensible, middle-of-the-road pro-European Tories, like William Whitelaw, who joined him in the campaign, than he ever could with his own rabid left—the illusion that the only re-

quirement for sane government was the alignment of the right wing of the Labour Party with the left wing of the Conservative Party. In fact, his major regret about the post-referendum period is that he "should have been more and not less 'disloyal.'" Trade-union power had obviously got out of hand, to the point where something needed to be done, and, as Jenkins says, "a coalition of the right of the Labour party and the left of the Conservative party might have done it with much greater precision than the bombastic Manichean Thatcherite revolution." Jenkins' vision of British politics in the seventies recalls nothing so much as the Monty Python sketch of the same era in which the Sensible Parties do battle with the Silly and Very Silly Parties. Jenkins saw the problem in just those terms, and thought that if only the Sensibles could unite, the country might be saved.

One of the Sillies, though, turned out to be far more Formidably Silly than Jenkins had anticipated. After the referendum, in 1978, while Jenkins brooded on how to bring about the natural centrist coalition that seemed to be prevented from taking power only by an outdated party structure, he went to Brussels as president of the European Commission and, during his term, the British government fell into the hands of Mrs. Thatcher. The scenes in which he tries to soften her passage among the alarmed Europeans are the best thing in the book, extending the dominant note of good-natured humor into the realm of Ealing Studios high comedy.

In 1979, Mrs. Thatcher arrived for her first meeting with the European Council, in Strasbourg, and "had distributed round the table without any notice to the commission or anybody else a paper which looked as though it came from us." She went on to insult the leaders of France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Ireland, and then, warming to the task, got into a fight with Helmut Schmidt, the West German Chancellor. Jenkins, still sounding a little shaken by the experience, reports that Mrs. Thatcher "had thus performed the considerable feat of unnecessarily irritating two big countries, three small ones, and the commission within her opening hour of performance at a European Council." Later,



at a meeting with Jenkins, she calmly announced that the other Europeans "are all a rotten lot." On another occasion, Jenkins approached her about accepting a compromise on the complicated issue of British payments from the European Community—a compromise that was more or less, but not quite, everything she wanted. She turned it down, and "perfectly good-temperedly but also with impregnable complacency she said, 'Don't try persuading me: you know I always find persuasion very counter-productive.'" In the long run, of course, she got exactly what she wanted.

The lesson that Jenkins took home from this experience was, not unreasonably, that something would have to be done. On his return to England, in 1981, he gave a series of talks and lectures on the need for a broad centrist coalition with no announced policies. He was obviously ready to leave Labour, but he thought that he would have no credibility if he fled by himself, and he therefore had to spend a good deal of time coaxing three other right-wing Labourites—Bill Rogers, Shirley Williams, and David Owen—to leave with him. Williams and Owen, though, had a powerful, in part sentimental commitment to old-style socialism, rather than to the pragmatic managerialism that Jenkins represented, and they insisted

that a new party, if one was formed, would have to be socialist, even to the point of being affiliated with the creaky old Socialist International. Jenkins agreed, and decided to lead this new grouping into an alliance with the still non-socialist Liberals.

The problem, one now sees, was that the infant Social Democratic Party was caught in a self-cancelling dilemma. The only way to get the necessary Labour stars and their supporters was to assure them that the party they were running to was still indubitably, if squishily, socialist. But this limited the appeal of the new party mostly to former Labour Party stars and their supporters. There were never going to be any important defections from the Tories, no matter how much they hated Thatcherism (and many did) or admired Jenkins (and many did that, too). As on so many other occasions in his career, Jenkins might have been better off acting more ruthlessly. It might have been smarter to take over the Liberal Party—not at all an unthinkable possibility—and then dare everyone else to join him, since a revived Liberal Party might have been able to catch at least a few left-leaning Tories. As Jenkins himself ruefully says in retrospect, politicians, no matter how unhappy they are, just don't leave parties in power; it is not cowardice but sound policy that causes rats to leave only sink-

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ing ships. And without the presence of any high-ranking Tory defectors the S.D.P. could never really become a "third way." It could only remain a Labour rump, and a rump turned the wrong way.

It's really no surprise that after a few misleading victories in by-elections, and after a brief high period in the polls, the S.D.P. collapsed. The collapse was hastened by internal squabbling and ill will, and was not helped by England's first-past-the-post electoral system, which meant that a party with a quarter of the popular vote had less than a twentieth of the seats. But the real problem was built into the mechanics of the electoral moment: one centrist party might create a new constituency, but two socialist parties could only split the old one.

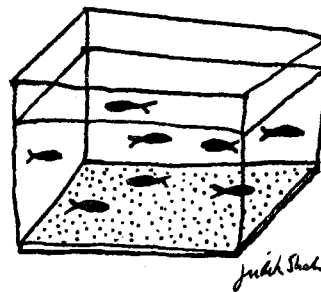
As always in Britain, the consolation prizes weren't bad. After the destruction of the S.D.P., Jenkins was elected Chancellor of Oxford; he also became a peer. From that happy vantage, he is still inclined to see himself as having played an essentially positive, ameliorative role in British politics. How does it look from this distance? What's striking is that Jenkins, though a much worse failure as a domestic politician than he is inclined to admit, was a much greater, and more prophetic, success as an international administrator than he is inclined to recognize. Jenkins, one feels, was never really at home as a campaigning politician; what he practiced was, in the end, a kind of anti-politics, which depended on appeals to common reason rather than to coalitions of particular interests. Not surprisingly, he found his greatest solidarity with that class of similarly sensible, international-minded technocrats whom he oversaw at the European Commission, and who also staff the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, and so on. (He feels a comradeship with Americans—Galbraith, Schlesinger—who share this outlook.)

Jenkins may eventually be remembered less as a failed national politician than as one of the key creators of the multinational, cosmopolitan managerial class whose increasing authority in world

bodies is bound to be the necessary counterpoise to the increasing fragmentation of national political life. It seems likely that as the world's national leaders become more and more Thatcher-like—authoritarian, insular, self-assured, and narrow in focus—they will be countered by groups of internationalist managers who are becoming more and more Jenkins-like. The struggle, or accommodation, between these two groups is apt to be of first importance in the future.

In retirement, Jenkins broods on a question that is crucial for every democracy, and particularly for those "emerging" democracies which seem stumped by the ability of Sillies of all

stripes to play a disproportionate role in electoral politics. Why did the S.D.P. fail? Why can't a coalition of the Sensibles beat the Sillies? The answer, one thinks after reading Jenkins' account, is that it can, but not always at once, and never by mandarin fiat. The ballot box, like the free market, is efficient, but only in the very long run; as long as everyone playing the game is committed to the basic rule of law—admittedly, a big proviso in some countries—things at least tend toward the center. Although Jenkins' attempt to claim the center for a single party failed, it is more or less his center that now dominates British politics. After Labour's years in the wilderness, John Smith, the new leader, remarked casually the other day that it didn't really matter who owned what, while it is the supposedly Thatcherite John Major who has felt compelled to embrace the Gaitskellite ideal of an egalitarian, classless society. Democratic politics don't need a broad, centrist coalition, because in the end almost every democratic country is already run by a broad, centrist coalition. It's just that voters don't find centrist coalitions very inspiring. The trick is that the various elements of the coalition have to be propelled by conviction—or at least the appearance of it. All sensible political parties need some Sillies. If there's a lesson to be drawn from Jenkins' book, it's that even the most intelligent politicians on their own can seldom find the center. Only politics can. ♦



MUSICAL EVENTS

JOVIAL PURSUITS

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

JUST what sort of silliness are we dealing with? At the time when Strauss and Hofmannsthal were beginning to come together on a piece to follow "Elektra" and "Der Rosenkavalier," in 1911, the poet wrote to the composer, with a certain warning worry in his tone, "When two men like us set out to produce a 'trifle' like this, it has to become a very serious trifle."

Hence, one has to suppose, the libretto's trafficking with notions of erotic psychology and, in the subsequently added prologue, with the joys and miseries of the creative life. But the effect of interlarding drama with vaudeville, of having the classical archetype of the abandoned woman coexist with the antics of a harlequinade troupe, is to keep the supposedly serious issues bumped up against ridicule.

We don't have to laugh at Ariadne's extravagant passion, because the piece is already doing it for us. And that sort of trifling, that sort of artistic suicide, is serious indeed.

On the other hand, one can simply regard "Ariadne auf Naxos" as a pretty night out at the theatre, and, if this is all Strauss intended, as seems likely, then that in itself would be a serious matter, in suggesting how a conspicuously gifted musician could, even before the First World War, condescend—and could condescend with abundant tact and generosity, without a hint of malice or cynicism, could positively enjoy condescending. The curious miracle of the new Met production is to realize this condescension in the same terms: to provide an en-

tertainment, without asking any of the awkward questions that could only spoil the whole thing.

Such a disarming pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment is probably easiest for the orchestra to achieve, though not necessarily at the level of expertise and finesse that the Met musicians reach under Ion Marin. Lovely sounds flow from

them—especially from the middle-register strings and the clarinet, through which the score remembers its way back to Mozart's quintets—and there's a feel for how Strauss lets us hear and share his sweet nostalgia, in the burnish on a sonority or the airiness of a rhythm. There's a feel, too, for the cheek with which, at the end, he plays on our memories of the suitable accompaniment

for a big love duet—reflects and subverts our expectations at the same time. If it weren't for the immediate toothsome-ness from beginning to end, one might think oneself listening not to music at all but to the fragrant memory of music—an effect the composer seems to invite in his chamber instrumentation, which sounds not only delectable but also hollow at the heart and out of place, as if it were an arrangement of a symphonic score.

What's necessary for the fragrance is a variety of pastiche that's oblique, conveying the scent without the substance, as in the wafting, triple-time G-minor music at the start of the second part, which is only lightly and distantly a ro-coco courtly dance. Presumably, Strauss



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could have written in a more vividly neo-classical manner, as Prokofiev and Reger were doing at much the same time, but his point was to look back without looking too closely—to write the kind of music that might have been written by the composer pictured on a Mozart-kugel. That was the music he reckoned his audience would prefer to any sort of throwback (we are in a doubly unreal world, where imitation would be too much), or even to the genuine article, perhaps because that was the music he preferred himself—or, at least, that was the music he preferred to be composing. His success would have been impossible if he had not—like few composers then but many since—shared the conservative tastes of his audience, and done so without any falseness or anxiety. Increasingly, what seems odd about Strauss is not the lapse from avant-garde grace after "Elektra" but the notion he once had that he and Schoenberg were in the same business.

What's also required in order that the orchestral music can go smilingly and comfortably on its way is an adriftness from the stage, and this, too, comes over with unnerving beauty at the Met. Nobody interferes with how both the harlequinade comedy and the Ariadne-Bacchus drama are expressed in the opera principally by voices, by singing actors, with the instrumental music responding from the pit only reluctantly, as if its mind were on other things. Wagner's ideal, of an orchestra present and participating in the action, is replaced by a dramatically still and null décor of gorgeous sound. Mr. Marin and his musicians go on unrolling the silk gauze, and nothing else matters.

Onstage, the superfluity—which, as I've suggested, is functional in this opera, a response to the work's central frivolousness—is brought about by the director, Elijah Moshinsky, and the designer, Michael Yeargan, who take nothing seriously except Strauss's disinclination to take anything seriously, his wish to please the audience. Before the curtain rises, before the musicians are even in the pit, the party has begun. A strewing of bright-colored wicker baskets, chests,

trunks, furniture, and birdcages across the front of the stage suggests one of the antique shops at the smarter end of Bleecker Street; a couple of the harlequinaders are in place, readying themselves.

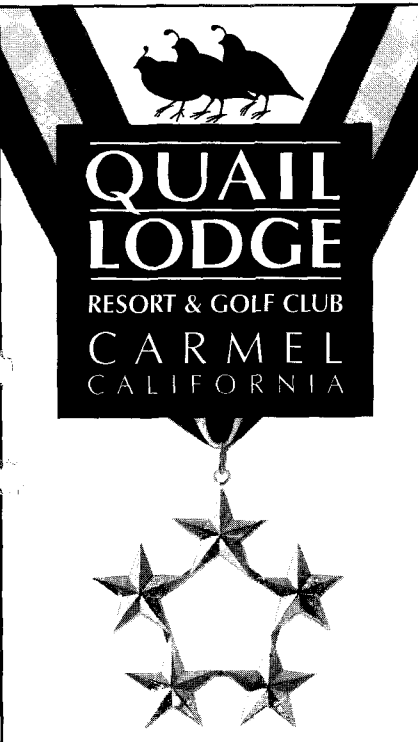
This area is revealed when the curtain goes up as the belowstairs apartments of the entertainers. Above, in an architectural cross-section made to out-Zeffirelli this company's "Tosca," can be seen part of a grand stairway and the backstage

of the private theatre. It's a set made for applause, and made, too, for a bustle of supernumeraries to insure and prolong the empty excitement. The Majordomo (Ragnar Ulfung, sneering with a tenor spike to his voice) is followed about by a swim of liveried servants, some of whom are deputed to take the promised fireworks ceremoniously out of a large lacquer-red box marked with black characters



(one might wonder whether pyrotechnic displays were really imported from China in this period, were it not that the whole point—of the production, as of the opera—is to create a fantasy eighteenth century, not a historical reconstruction); the pantomime company is expanded to include a rubberlimbed, juggling Pierrot and some children dressed in the same bright lozenges as Zerbinetta and Harlequin; other people are busy winching up a backcloth in the theatre. Inconsequential activity, in the frolicsome world of this piece, becomes consequential, simply because it looks busy, expensive, and properly operatic, and those standards of superficial appeal—of appealing to what the audience knows and likes, to what it remembers, and to what it hopes for—are the only ones that the production, following the work, lives by.

Most of the opening-night vocal performances in the prologue were appealing, too, but rather more solidly, as again the opera requires. In some perfect alternative universe, there may be a Susanne Mentzer who has a touch more volume, and whose voice always descends with sureness another semitone or two, but the one we have is special enough. It was interesting to be seeing and hearing her in this performance just a few days after



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her final Octavian in "Der Rosenkavalier," for though she brings to both works an attractive freedom and a sure-tuned lustre (except occasionally on those bottom notes), as the Composer in—and supposedly of—"Ariadne auf Naxos" she slims her tone and projects a quite different sort of youthfulness: not bouncy, smiling, and radiant but ardent, purposeful, driven, and certainly ambitious enough to countenance the compromise of allowing the comedians to share the stage with her work.

Or should that be "his work"? Another feature of Ms. Mentzer's performance in "Ariadne" is her plausibility as a youth. In "Rosenkavalier," she was irrepressibly female, which isn't necessarily a fault: the cross-dressing in that opera has its problems, and one looks forward to the feminist production in which Octavian is palpably a woman in drag, so that Sophie might well be unsure at the end what she's getting. The breeches role was one kind of operatic treat Strauss found himself better able to serve up in the later work, possibly because in the figure of the "Ariadne" Composer the sensuality is all under-tone. The young man's passion is for his art: he's a Theseus, a hero who has his sights on other things than dalliance. Ms. Mentzer conveys his intensity simply and well, not only in how she sings but in how she stands, and moves, and looks. There are potentially corny moments that she, by her conviction, makes strong (daring to be wholeheartedly corny is the name of the game in this piece): the discovery in a little boy Harlequin of a first sign that more is going to happen this evening than her opera, or her resistant pose, back to the audience, when the Majordomo announces that the opera and the clownery are to take place simultaneously.

Some of the other characters in the prologue are cast from type, which seems again to be in perfect accord with the score. Writing an opera that represents the performance of an opera, Strauss was able to create roles that break through the barrier between life and theatre, between singer and part. As the Music Master, Thomas Stewart was, in the stage illusion as in the outer world, a winning veteran. Then the arrival of Jessye Norman brought a living icon onstage to act up as the Prima Donna. Ms. Norman isn't so suited to

She's beautiful.

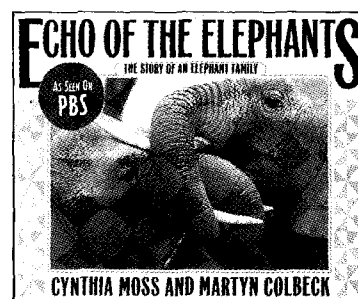
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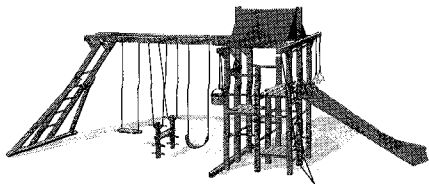
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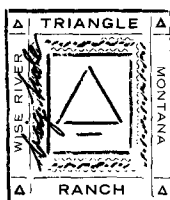
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the suddenness and angularity of her music in the prologue, but the audience frisson at her first entrance made the point before she opened her mouth: this was a great operatic lady for real, never mind the show. And since it's entirely possible to believe that Ms. Norman sings her way through life when she's not performing, the confusion of character with actuality began to happen, and was held back only by the unlikeliness of the real Ms. Norman's behaving with such bad manners except when required to by Hofmannsthal and Strauss.

In the opera, in Ariadne's long, rich, elevated melodies of lament, Ms. Norman is thoroughly at home and magnificent, and all the time reveals how the filtering of reality into artifice takes place differently now, in this second part of the work.

What we're asked to appreciate is not someone singing Ariadne but someone singing herself singing Ariadne: Ms. Norman's performance, marked by the strength in sumptuousness of her particular style, is her realization of a grand being one might call Jessye Norman as Ariadne. And this is, once more, altogether in harmony with the ironies of the piece, in harmony with Strauss's acceptance, and use, of the fact that people go to the opera house in order to see not characters but singers enacting characters. The title personage in "Ariadne auf Naxos" is a star well before she's placed in the heavens by Bacchus, and Ms. Norman performs with a star's supremacy and triumph, in the splendor of her singing but also in how she stands (Mr. Yeargan's black-purple dress for her works with Gil Wechsler's lighting to place the accent on her facial profile in attitudes of nobility), and in how she seems more to flow than to walk on and off stage.

The showing of the Ariadne story as a performance—as a performance we've seen being prepared in the prologue—helps us to regard the heroine as more performer than character, or as performer before character. But if we're to understand her as "our" performer—as Ms. Norman, in this case—then the illusion created by the prologue has to be dismantled. Strauss achieves that dismantling by providing his audience-

pleasing romantic mirage of eighteenth-century music in the "opera seria," and the Met production team follows him in making no pretense that the theatre of this second part is the one we saw in the prologue. Despite the gilt frame within the proscenium arch, this stage—boasting vast, smoothly sliding panels of skies and star maps, not a mean backdrop on a rope, and with an abruptly modernist rock for Ariadne's island—is undisguisedly the Met's. This isn't Naxos.

This isn't an eighteenth-century Viennese vision of Naxos. This is the theatre we've come to, populated by the singers we've come to hear.

Within that theatre, the follies and jollities of the masqueraders are conveyed as unashamedly as is Ms. Norman's statuesque emotion. There are pranks.

There's a cart of toys. There's Mark Oswald as a saturnine Harlequin. Above all, there's Ruth Ann Swenson as a Zerbinetta who can twitter way above the treble staff and keep up the fullness of tone that's necessary in this auditorium: it's an astonishing performance, if a little lacking in gaiety. The nymphs somewhat compensate for that lack by becoming part of the skittishness, singing rapturously and with wholly artificial concern, and perched atop high, built-up costumes: they look like candles.

Then, at the end, in another episode of life entering art, the arrival of Bacchus is the arrival of a singer who has made his reputation elsewhere and is appearing on this stage for the first time: Thomas Moser. In yet one more demonstration that we've deserted the world of the prologue, this Bacchus has left his gilt laurel crown to don piratical black attire (but it really doesn't matter what he looks like, which is perhaps what the costume is saying. Listen to the voice. Mr. Moser began his career as a Mozart tenor, and there's still that care and control to what he does, but now he commands splendid amplitude and a trumpetlike ring. He ably matches Ms. Norman, so that the finale, instead of seeming just absurdly inflated, seems absurdly inflated and absolutely right. With singers like these onstage, absurd inflation is the point, and they give an evening of glorious vacuousness its fitting conclusion. ♦





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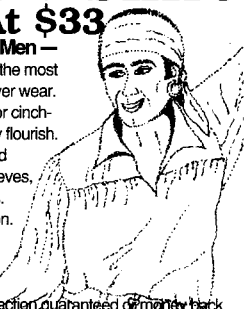
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

CRASH COURSES

BY ANTHONY LANE

WHEN was the last time that a movie started a craze? People like to steal tough-guy epigrams from Arnold Schwarzenegger and Clint Eastwood, but that's just talk. Women in 1977 started wearing squashy hats and big Chaplin pants in an effort to become Annie Hall, but that wasn't quite enough; you had to be buzz-brained and beautiful, too, and drive like a lunatic. A true craze demands patterns of behavior, or preferably misbehavior. News of the food fight in "National Lampoon's Animal House" spread like rabies; John Belushi and friends had let loose the dogs of chaos, and for a while every campus in the country was lost in a blur of flying buns. Cheap and mindless, of course, but then movies have always been one of the best reasons to lose your mind. Now we have "Watch It," written and directed by Tom Flynn, which just might repeat the trick.

The title sounds like a publicity gimmick, imploring us to go and see this film at any cost. In fact, it refers to a game the main characters have played ever since they were at college together. The rules are easy: surprise one of the others with a practical joke, shouting "Watch It!" then sit back and wait for revenge. This can take weeks: the more laborious, costly, and intricate the gag, the better. Thus, to tinker with the brakes on your pal's car would be no fun at all, but to devise a remote-control system and plant it under the hood, so that you can press a button and flip his trunk open in the middle of traffic—that's a whole bundle of laughs. In the event, these technical Watch Its start to seem too finicky: Flynn has dreamed up some neat variations, and the best ones do catch you on the hop, but I almost preferred the simple, glancing variety—a fistful of frightened doves, say, bursting out of a cupboard.

Flynn's real problem is padding out the time between jokes. The film is set in Chicago during a long hot summer—you know, one of those magical movie summers which the characters remember forever and the rest of us forget by next Tuesday. You hardly ever see people working; instead, they sit out on the porch, or stay in and talk on the phone. In one major scene, a guy gets to lie on his bed for a while and gaze at the ceiling. The movie tries to tell us about growing up, but really it's about tedium and how to fight it off. The central characters are all men, but only just—a bunch of friends with hard, hollow skulls in which nothing stirs, although every now and then you feel the breeze of an idea passing through. There are three of them—Michael (Jon Tenney), Rick (John C. McGinley), and



Danny (Tom Sizemore)—and they live together in a real boys' house: furniture but no frills, more beer than bric-a-brac. There's food in the fridge, but only because someone went shopping during the Reagan Administration. Anyway, who said fridges are for food? This is Watch It country, and as soon as John (Peter Gallagher) turns up he discovers what fridges are really for.

John is Michael's long-lost cousin, come to stay for the summer. Michael fancies himself a high-grade stud, but it's John's face that causes all the trouble. Gallagher can't help looking soulful and sensitive, and his ripe features seduce the movie; they send it upmarket, away from "Porky's" and toward "The Big Chill." Danny will recover from a party by resting his head in an air vent and saying that he feels "like a big dog"; John, on the other hand, likes to walk a girl home and talk about alcoholism and family history. You vaguely approve of him, but he dulls the movie down; he plays Watch It with

ingenuity but without gusto, and by the end the practical jokes are too practical for fun. They were never meant to haul people through an emotional crisis; they were designed to make you spill your drink.

In the middle of the film, there's a grisly segment when the jokes run out completely. Flynn has written his characters into such a pickle that he can't think how to get them out, and it's no laughing matter. First of all, we have Cynthia Stevenson (last seen getting a broken heel and a raw deal in "The Player") as a woman trying to tame Rick: a tough assignment, given McGinley's pushy, cartoon performance—a likable portrait of a man you'd loathe to meet. But she goes for it, and smartly slaps him in the face, with a whippy topspin and hardly any backswing, then reaches for the killer smash: "If you ever become a man, look me up." Then, there's a vet called Anne (Suzy Amis), whom John has filched from Michael. He wants her back, though it's hard to see why: Amis looks totally zonked, too weary of these guys to be the spinning hub of the plot. She's put to shame by Lili Taylor, who plays her assistant at work—a meagre part, but she pins her hair with plastic daisies and turns up the brightness on the whole film.

If "Watch It" were better to look at, it might have a better chance of raising spirits. You sit there wanting the colors to heat up, but, apart from John's angry red shirt, they stay flat and drained; occasionally, the image grows another layer of grain, as if someone had just sprinkled bread crumbs on the screen. There's an amateurish tinge to all this; you often catch it at the beginning of a shot, as the camera moves in past a statue or a set of pillars to snatch some instant dignity, or ruminates on fallen leaves to signal the onset of autumn. Only when the action moves to a baseball park does the light acquire a sophisticated glow: there's a promising, end-of-the-day sexiness in the air as John and Anne settle down to watch the game. But it's no more than a hint, and it gets wiped out by the schmalzy shot that follows—a kiss to round off the evening, with the stadium and the soundtrack both shimmering in the background. "Watch It" is too skimpy to be solemn, and you find yourself kicking against its good intentions. The more Flynn tries to unroll a chronicle of fine feelings, with callow young men starting to learn about themselves, the more you want these guys to regress,

slope back into the Animal House. Why should comedy always mean the getting of wisdom? Why not Watch It, then Forget All About It?

If you arrived early for "Ethan Frome" and caught the end of the previous showing, you might wonder what kind of movie this was. The credits lay out a feast of possibilities: "Stuntwoman," "Stunt Coordinator," "Cat Wrangler," and—my favorite—"Snow Wrangler." How do you wrangle snow? That's far more mysterious than anything else about the film. Edith Wharton's celebrated tale was published in 1911, and has stood the test of time, at least until now. In the hands of the director, John Madden, it takes the test and fails. There's nothing pressing about the movie, none of Wharton's gracious urgency; it sits there onscreen looking distant and faintly daft.

The film opens on a white landscape, though it's not as white as the director would like to think. A lonely figure, played by Tate Donovan, steps from a train and shields his eyes. "The snow," he says. "It's so bright." It is? We see no such glare; maybe the wrangler was sick that day. It's only a moment's disappointment, but you can already sense the film grabbing for an intensity it can't quite reach. As for the snow-blind figure, he turns out to be the new minister of Starkfield and the observer of the Frome saga, Reverend Smith. That sounds like a cheap alias, and, in a way, it is: Wharton's narrator had a job "connected with the big power-house at Corbury Junction," and it seems typical of the movie to rarefy him like this—remove him from the power-house and turn his collar back to front. "Ethan Frome" marked one of Wharton's rare sorties from the life of the drawing room, toward "the hard compulsions of the poor," and you can feel the prose straining unused muscles to keep her natural gentility at bay. The least that Madden could do, you might think, would be to respect that effort; but his movie is presented to us by American Playhouse Theatrical Films, and nearly suffocates under the weight of polite culture.

This politeness goes way beyond the social: it stiffens into a kind of fearful artistic decorum that shies from risk. Madden is so careful not to spring any shocks on you that he loses touch with the tension in Wharton's plot—the agonizing knowledge that one spark of daring can ignite a man's life and that he may not be

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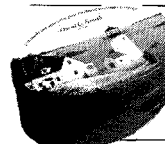
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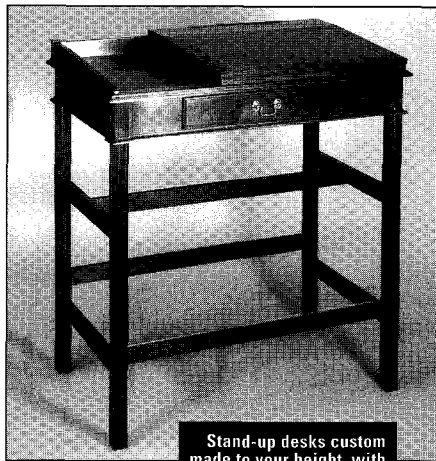
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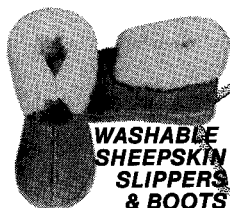
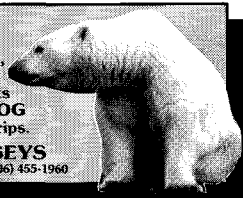
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man enough to strike it. We first see Ethan Frome (Liam Neeson) bent almost double, dragging one leg as if it bore an invisible ball and chain. The film burdens him with bleakness and never lets up; an early scene at his mother's funeral is filmed in Whistler tones—dun and charcoal and clouded grays, relieved only by the winking gold of Ethan's collar stud. From here we are dragged through the sorry tale: how Ethan marries his cousin Zeena (Joan Allen), then falls in love with her cousin Mattie Silver (Patricia Arquette), who comes to help out but only brings disaster.

It sounds loyal to the book, but Wharton led us along more adventurous paths—skipping from one flashback to the next, so slyly that you hardly noticed. Madden and his screenwriter, Richard Nelson, turn this into a calendar of glum voice-overs, spoken by the minister's landlady: "After five summers had passed," "I guess a year went by," and "Spring came, then summer." On the page we are plunged headlong into Ethan's love as he watches Mattie at a village reel—a scene that the film primly keeps back for later. Wharton's darkness is exciting, shot through with tiny erotic thrills; the dancing, like the climactic sledding, has to make do for all the kicks that Ethan and Mattie are denied elsewhere. The story, Wharton claimed in 1911, "was written in the only quiet time I've had in the last distracted two years"; but that very distraction—not least the closing act of her tortuous affair with W. Morton Fullerton—pressed in upon the quietude of her writing and gave it the clench of exhausted despair.

All this is dissipated by the movie; there's nothing here to catch you up or sweep you on. If only Warner Brothers had made the version it planned in the nineteen-forties, with Gary Cooper and Bette Davis. Who knows, a touch of high melodrama might have helped no end. You get it here from time to time with Joan Allen; she does good work as Zeena, the shrewish hypochondriac who makes Job sound like Mickey Rooney. At one point, she's so furious that she simply stares at the camera, as if to say, "Isn't this just hell?" Madden, however, is too poker-faced to let us laugh at her; he doesn't even include that sublime moment when Ethan walks in and finds Zeena reading "Kidney Troubles and Their

Cure." As for the ending, it should be a gift—some solid action, finally, as the lovers go for a suicidal spin down the hillside. "I want you," Mattie breathes, pausing seductively, "to take me down again." But we don't even see what happens: the camera looks away, then muffles the result in slow motion. People complain about too much violence in American movies, but couldn't some of the excess have been channelled into "Ethan Frome"?

The main reason to see this film is Liam Neeson. It's not his best work, but you can't ignore him for a second. His face is all concentration, as if he were peering down a microscope at the source of his pain, but when he turns his back we get blackout—he looms across the frame. Neeson is huge, but although he's not ashamed of his bulk, he'd rather not throw it around. If anything, he seems halting and fastidious in his motions—one of those who have power to hurt but will do none. You have to go back to Boris Karloff to find that level of brute delicacy, the sadness of a body at loggerheads with its soul. This may explain the sudden demand for his presence (Steven Spielberg has cast him as the lead in "Schindler's List"): Hollywood has plenty of hunks, but only a couple—Neeson and Nick Nolte—who look as if they'd think twice, or think at all, before committing themselves to action.

Neeson is most powerful when almost everything is kept back, held under pressure; he spent most of "Husbands and Wives" being kind and apologetic, but you felt (or hoped) that at any moment he might draw himself up in front of the other characters—the whole precious, jittery crew of them—and slug them in the chops. He didn't, of course; he ended up with Mia Farrow instead. But that power of restraint produced one of the few convincing portraits of goodness in recent cinema, and his Ethan Frome is a worthy addition: a decent sort who couldn't quite change his life for good, and so changed it for ill. To Edith Wharton, Ethan "seemed a part of the mute melancholy landscape, an incarnation of its frozen woe, with all that was warm and sentient in him fast bound below the surface." This movie is like a dose of frozen woe, but, thanks to Liam Neeson, we can glimpse a ghost of that warmth, and pity a man condemned to haunt himself. ♦



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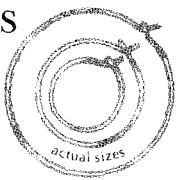


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LEVERAGED BLOWOUT

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

AT a recent conservative gala, the humorist P. J. O'Rourke called for an eighties revival. Those were the days, he lamented. Buildings seemed taller then. Under Ronald Reagan's absent-minded nod, America regained its eagle pride, reducing Communism to a rundown store of empty shelves. And there was fun to be had in the triumph of capitalism. Cocaine. Confetti-strewn parties. Bony women in poofy skirts. (I'm paraphrasing a wee bit.) Wealth and privilege didn't feel the need to wear false modesty; ruthless self-interest was right out there in the raw. Now, with President Clinton hugging everyone in sight and making "sacrifice" the nation's mantra, flinging your money into other people's faces has lost its flair.

O'Rourke was right in one respect: the glamour of laissez-faire is receding fast. In finance and fiction, the era of the leveraged buyout has already entered into legend. The two best thunderhoofed narratives of the period remain Tom Wolfe's novel "Bonfire of the Vanities" and Bryan Burroughs and John Helyar's "Barbarians at the Gate," a hot-line account of the takeover of RJR Nabisco. Brought to the screen by the director Brian De Palma and the screenwriter Michael Cristofer, "Bonfire of the Vanities" made one of the biggest splats in Hollywood history. De Palma translated Wolfe's novel as deluxe, hysterical farce, shooting each closeup as if he were mounting heads on his wall, and goggling through a fish-eye lens at ghastly parties of rich folk, all of whom looked like George Plimpton exhumed. Undaunted by De Palma's disastrous example, the playwright and TV writer Larry Gelbart (best known for "M*A*S*H") has adapted "Barbarians at the Gate" for HBO, and he, too, has opted

for farce. But there's far less perspiration, looming importance, and all-star lard in this battle of wills. Unlike "Bonfire," it has brains enough not to lecture.

Directed by Glenn Jordan, "Barbarians at the Gate" (next airdates March 23rd and 28th) begins with RJR Nabisco's C.E.O., F. Ross Johnson, being reluctantly cajoled into buying out the company to revive its languishing stock price. A buyout will not only quiet the shareholders but put Johnson himself in

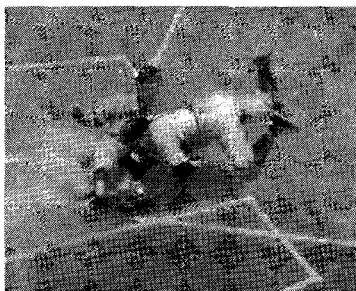


Predators at the Ball: Leilani Ferrer and James Garner in "Barbarians at the Gate."

the catbird seat as owner. A self-made millionaire who started out with a paper route, Ross (as everyone calls him) is a walking corporate logo, who sponsors celebrity golf tournaments, sports a trophy wife on his arm ("Basic Instinct" 's Leilani Ferrer, who gives off a well-kept glow), and commands a corporate fleet of planes as if it were his own air force. That he's played by James Garner puts us immediately on his side, for all his blowhard buffoonery. The former star of "Maverick" and "The Rockford Files," Garner has always been a cool mug of all-male individualism, letting his big

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frame attain maximum relaxation as he flicks his lines with no-sweat aplomb. He has no problem filling Ross's big boots. Chatting on the phone with a business associate in the next plane, his wife nuzzling him with her foot, Ross is at one with his perks.

But there are things beyond his sky-king control. Half a billion dollars has been committed to the creation of a smokeless cigarette called Premier. Only drawback is, a team of researchers solemnly informs Ross, the test results reveal that the product tastes like—well, shit. "Shit?" asks Ross. "Shit was the consensus, yes, sir," says one white coat. "We spent five hundred million dollars and we come up with a turd with a tip?" says Ross. One of the best running gags in "Barbarians" has various characters innocently lighting up a Premier, then wrinking their noses in disgust.

If James Garner is ideally suited to his role, the casting of Jonathan Pryce as the LBO kingpin Henry Kravis seems a mad stroke. In real life, as even financial lay folk know, Kravis, a founding partner of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, is short and temperamentally combustible; in "Barbarians" he is portrayed by the tall, composed Pryce, who seems to have stepped out of an upright coffin, the smirk on his face lifted from Iago or some other shadowy intriguer. He sips his coffee as if it were brewed from the last remaining beans on earth. His cultivation might seem like a spoof, similar to Jeremy Irons' sepulchral tones in "Reversal of Fortune," if it weren't for the mental chill Pryce manages to convey in the pauses between lines. As he listens, the air around him seems to harden.

Where Pryce's Kravis is playing for real, the other parties in "Barbarians" seem stuck in a silly masquerade. James Robinson III, the recently deposed head of American Express (played here by paunchy Fred Dalton Thompson), first appears in a Superman costume, dressed for some charity do. (It's his Shearson Lehman team, spearheaded by Peter Riegert's half-cocked Peter Cohen, that finds itself fending off Kravis in the bidding war for RJR Nabisco.) Robinson's annoying wife, Linda (Joanna Cassidy), a publicist who's playing both sides of the game, is costumed as Marie Antoinette. Ted Forstmann, an investment banker who

preaches prophetic hellfire sermons against the use of junk bonds, turns up as Tonto. Forstmann is played by David Rasche, whom true TV nuts will remember as the borderline-psycho cop who whispered sweet nothings to his gun in the Dirty Harry parody "Sledge Hammer!" Blond and blue-eyed, Rasche has the open vents of a cheerful fanatic. When he rhapsodizes about why he hates Henry Kravis, his body seems to rise from the floor.

The big showpiece in "Barbarians" is a Bush-Quayle fund-raiser organized around a country-and-Western theme, which features the deal-makers in dude ranch drag (all except Kravis, snappy in yacht-club blue) trading quips and inside tips during a hoedown. It's the telefilm's operating conceit: the heavy hitters in "Barbarians" as corporate cowboys whose offices are their corrals. They open fire with faxes. As the price for RJR Nabisco spirals out of sight, the numbers seemingly snapped from the air, the stage is set for a showdown between duelling briefcases. There's even a Sergio Leone spaghetti-Western rattle on the soundtrack as the principals converge on the executive suite. It's hardly subtle, but it has a foolish ebullience that's quite funny. Which is more than can be said of the frequent shots of beggars rummaging through trash as the camera pans across fleets of limos—a facile irony, and insincere, too. In truth, "Barbarians" couldn't care less about the homeless. Its stony heart is with those slick phonies stepping out of their limos. They're where the action is. Or, rather, was. The RJR Nabisco

buyout represents the last big blaze of the takeover craze. The rest is debt.



"Barbarians at the Gate" makes it clear that despite P. J. O'Rourke's heartfelt wishes, the eighties aren't coiled for a come-

back. Even the much derided disco seventies had more style, because disco itself was about clothes, attitude, non-stop whirlpool rhythms—about creating a new identity through dance. Divorced from other Balzacian engorgements, greed becomes merely a numbers game. No one in "Barbarians"—not even Ross Johnson—betrays a sliver of psyche. Totally out for themselves, they're all hard, waxed surface, and I think we've got tired of hot shots who are nothing but shell. Still, it must be said that "Barbarians" moves those shells around awfully well. ♦

FICTION

The Fourteen Sisters of Emilio
Montez O'Brien
 by Oscar Hijuelos
 (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; \$22)

THE new book from the author of "The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love" is, like its predecessor, exuberant, richly detailed, and plotless—more saga than novel. Reading it is like sifting through a sack of charming old family pictures: the father of the Montez O'Brien clan is a photographer, who came to Pennsylvania from Ireland in 1896, and, with his black cloth and hand-held flash, he often takes photographs of his Cuban wife, his fourteen daughters, and his one—passionately longed-for—son. Each of these characters gets a moment in the narrative spotlight, but ultimately their individual voices, and all the births and deaths and meals and visits to New York City and Cuba and Hollywood that make up their days, are subsumed in the great tide of the family's life over nearly a century. If there's a focus on anything in particular, it's the romantic fortunes of the children—the oldest, Margarita, who marries unhappily in her youth and happily in her old age, and the handsome Emilio, who, after his coddled boyhood in a house full of sisters, has trouble finding satisfaction in love. Hijuelos is unabashed in his portrayal of what good love, finally, amounts to: these pages are full of sex (mostly from the woman's point of view, to the author's apparent relish), and in a more profound way, his populous book is a meditation on procreation—on family, that is—as the source of true happiness.

Juggling the Stars
 by Tim Parks
 (Grove; \$18.95)

MORRIS DUCKWORTH, the anti-hero of Tim Parks' sixth novel, is an arrogant, impoverished English tutor marooned in Verona, unhappily sucking up to the dumb, rich Italian students who pay his rent. Meanwhile, the life of ease and erudition for which he feels destined is passing him by. Then Morris steals an elegant Gucci briefcase on impulse and decides that he may be a criminal genius. Before long, he has eloped with one of his wealthy students, a sweet Italian girl, whose strict family fears that she has been kidnapped. Or *has* she been kid-



BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

napped, and is she just too besotted with her attractive kidnapper to notice? The unbalanced Morris, elated and terrified by his rapidly complicating life, cannot seem to decide: he grows attached to his unsuspecting sweetheart while sending gruesome ransom notes off to her relatives on the sly. Parks has long been an expert on the marriage of convenience between sin and rationalization, and much of the humor and the suspense here come from wondering how long Morris will be able to excuse his increasingly—alarmingly—inexcusable behavior. Yet, while this is a considerably more violent book than the author's recent domestic novels, it also seems less serious—a surprisingly lighthearted, if dark, entertainment.

GENERAL

Elizabeth Bishop: Life and the Memory of It
 by Brett C. Millier
 (California; \$28)

RISING above the psychological clichés that mar so many chronicles of the self-destructive, this first biography of Elizabeth Bishop, like Ian Hamilton's of Robert Lowell, describes with evenness and restraint a life of considerable turmoil. The tragedy of Bishop's childhood—her father died before she was a year old, her mother was committed to an insane asylum when she was five, and at seven she developed a chronic debilitating asthma—was apparent in her autobiographical stories and essays, but her adult life was less well known. Millier compiles the complete itinerary of Bishop's incessant travels; although Bishop found a temporary haven in Brazil, this account reveals that her tendency toward relationships with unstable, even suicidal, lovers and her reliance on alcohol continually uprooted her. Unlike Lowell and other poets of her time, Bishop disdained the confes-

sional, but Millier's authoritative readings of her poems suggest how they allude glancingly, through ironic veils of fable and allegory, to her homosexuality, her alcoholism, and her paralyzing depression. This biography will act as a powerful corrective to the impression of serene perfection engendered by the greatest of Bishop's poems; they were in no way as easy to write as their author made them seem.

A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement
 by Philip Shabecoff
 (Hill & Wang; \$25)

THE author, a former *Times* environmental correspondent who now works for an environmental news service, starts off by explaining how the United States began destroying its outdoors and how, gradually at first, individuals and organizations began to work at restoring a forest, say, or preserving a game species. Before the First World War, the breach between Gifford Pinchot and John Muir defined the conflict between two environmental traditions: conservation for sustained yield versus preservation of the wilderness. Though the conflict persists, Shabecoff, in his enthusiasm for the modern ecological movement, tends to minimize its importance. In the decades after the Second World War, he thinks, the public was aroused by a succession of flagrant insults to the environment, and he dates contemporary environmentalism from the first Earth Day—April 22, 1970. He believes that popular understanding and appreciation of environmental concerns have taken root, and in a detailed and reassuring review of the eighties he recalls public and congressional resistance to the Reagan Administration's efforts to destroy protective legislation of the seventies. He is particularly optimistic about the multiplicity of local citizens' organizations, which demonstrates the depth and breadth of popular involvement.

FROM OUR PAGES

The Elephant Vanishes, the first collection of stories by Haruki Murakami to appear in English, has been published by Knopf (translated from the Japanese by Alfred Birnbaum and Jay Rubin; \$26.50). Some of the stories first appeared in *The New Yorker*. ♦



SHOUTS AND MURMURS

AT THE NEWS

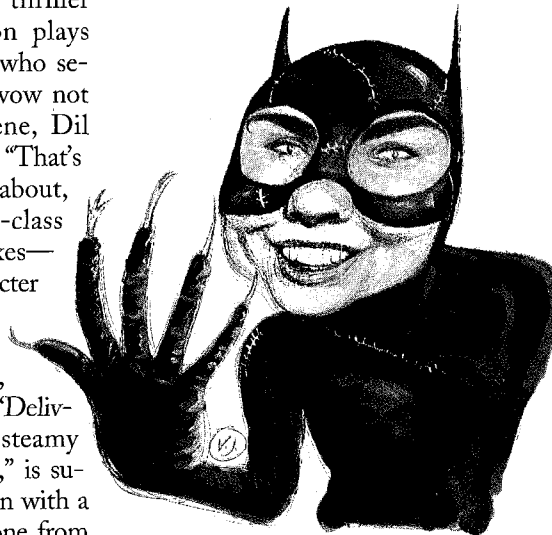
BY FRANK CAMMUSO AND HART SEELY

HELLO again, I'm Roger Dellar, news critic for the Chicago *Post-Tribune*, and across the aisle from me is Gene Skowron, news critic for the Chicago *Tribune-Post*. The Academy Awards are near, which means it's time to award our own Oscars to the news artists who last year stood headline and shoulders—heh—above the rest.

That's right, Roger, and topping my list for Best Actor is Bill Clinton, star of the disorienting political thriller "The Crying Game." Clinton plays Dil, a beautiful public servant who seduces the middle class with a vow not to raise its taxes. In this scene, Dil promises his lover a better life: "That's what the new covenant is all about, an America in which middle-class incomes—not middle-class taxes—are going up." Later, Dil's character undergoes an incredible metamorphosis. Don't worry—we won't reveal it here. Clinton, whose previous credits include "Deliverance," "Hairspray," and the steamy nail-biter "Flowers in the Attic," is superb as the gorgeous statesperson with a surprise that nearly stops everyone from "thinkin' about tomorrow."

Oh, come on, now, Gene! You can see the plot twist coming six months before Dil unveils his—well, let's call it a stimulus package. Take away Clinton's hair and his supporting cast and it's clear that his performance wouldn't match those of several artists who were snubbed by the Academy. What about Pat Buchanan in the title role of "Bram Stoker's Dracula," Jerry Brown as the lead in "Encino Man," or Ross Perot's lunatic romp in "Father of the Bride"? To say nothing of Bob Packwood's portrayal of blind libido in "Scent of a Woman"!

Well, Roger, we disagree there. But, if you want to talk snubs, how about Zoë Baird for Best Actress in "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle"? Her portrayal of a happily married attorney who unwittingly hires a career-killing Peruvian nanny sent shock waves throughout the Federal Register. In this chilling scene, Baird tells her friend, played by Orrin ("Porky's II") Hatch, that she senses no danger: "My under-



standing of the legal advice coming to me secondhand was that it wasn't viewed as an enforcement matter." The success of "Cradle" at the box office prompted a string of "nanny" knockoffs, and I think Academy voters just got confused.

I'm with you there, Gene, and we agree that Best Actress belongs to Hillary Rodham Clinton. In a stunning reversal of her blockbuster role last summer as Catwoman, Clinton shone this winter in the heartwarming "Love Field." She played a simple minded blonde who takes a cross-country bus ride in the hope of paying homage to the late J.F.K.

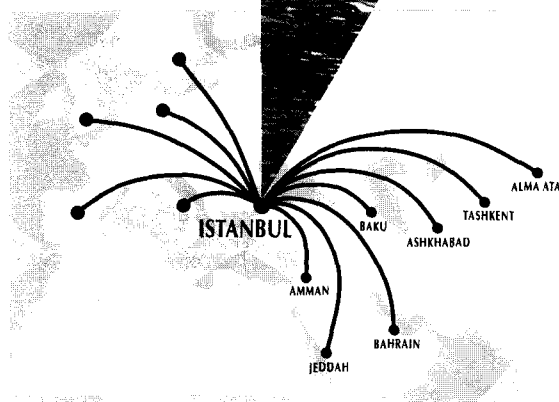
Which brings us to Best News Story, and, again, the voters ignored some of our favorites. What about "A League of Their Own," with Barbara Boxer, Dianne Feinstein, and Carol Moseley Braun as Democrats who in troubled times are asked to play hardball and make fans forget the old Washington Senators? Or Jack Kevorkian's psychodrama "Medicine Man" and Admiral James Stockdale in "Far and Away"? Some memorable news did get nominated—most notably "A Few Good Men," the story of the Tailhook Convention. But our choice is "Unforgiven." Produced and directed by James ("The Silence of the Lambs") Baker, this rough-edged saga of the New West dismantled the Hollywood-created myth of Presidential statesmanship. In this clip, George Bush is an aging mudslinger returning to his old ways: "My dog Millie knows more about foreign affairs than these two bozos." Baker and Bush took no shortcuts in their realistic portrayal of a politician haunted by his notorious past.

That brings us to our Home Videodisk Pick of the Week: "The Gulf War," a big-budget Western from 1991 starring Norman Schwarzkopf, Saddam Hussein, and Arthur Kent. The dialogue runs weak, and the outcome is never in doubt, but the special effects are well worth seeing again. We both give it "thumbs up."

That's all for this week. Next time, we'll review Rodney King's latest masterpiece, "Groundhog Day," the story of a nation that keeps reliving the same day, over and over, until it learns its lesson. Well, for now the newsroom is closed. See you "At the News." ♦

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